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LIGHT IN DARKNESS.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

The night drew on, thro' paths unknown
The weary traveler toil'd alone,
Now climb'd the rocky steep with pain,
Now plunging cross'd the marshy plain,
Or grop'd thro' trackless forests dread,
Where brambles spring and pitfalls spread;
At length, thro' clouds that barr'd his way
Look'd forth the Moon, with silver ray,
And loud he sang, in grateful love,
"*What's dark below, is light above.*"

The Grave, that never yet hath said
"*Enough*," was with my heart's-blood fed,
And as I turn'd with bitter throe
From its cold, thankless brink to go,
I marvel'd why a Hand Divine
Should smite that last, lone hope of mine:
Yet once, as holy twilight wove
Its veil of grey o'er field and grove,
I heard a voice,—the voice of Love,—
"What's dark below, is light above."

Hartford, August 3d, 1857.

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BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, THE OCEAN, AND OTHER CLIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER;" "THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW;" "KARMEL, THE SCOUT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE TUTOR'S LAST LESSON.

"You've kept your friend waiting, sir," said Margery, as Bion entered the kitchen where she and Jack sat.

"I couldn't help it, Aunty. I had just come to a subject so interesting that I could not leave it."

"A great subject, I guess."

"So it was, Aunty. It was very interesting; and I couldn't leave it until it was finished."

"Oho—I'll warrant ye he'll never leave a book with a page unfinished if he can help it," interposed Jack. "He's a great hand at readin'. I believe if the ship was a-sinkin' he'd stop to finish his chapter or verse."

Jack meant this for a joke; and as he directed it to Margery, and smiled very generously, she felt pleased, and smiled, too; and her visitors departed, leaving her in excellent humor.

The two companions had just stepped from the stoop when a small boy, meanly clad and well covered with dirt, approached them from the alley that led to the street. He stopped, as he came near, and asked if they could tell him where Margery Grutt lived.

"Right in here," said Jack, pointing to the door behind him.

"Be ye's jes' come out from there?" asked the boy.

"Yes," returned Jack.

"Be there a cove in there as is called Bion Bernard?"

"That's my name," quickly answered our hero.

"Oho—it be, eh?" uttered the messenger, running his dirt-surrounded eyes over the speaker's form. "Ye's a littler cove 'n I thought ye. But p'r'aps ye know Barney Driscol?"

"Yes. I know him."

"Well—he wants to see ye."

"Is he sick?" asked Bion, earnestly.

"Sick, eh?" the boy gave a comical leer at Jack as he spoke, and then, with an awful wink—a wink which laid the dirt in thick ridges about the left eye—he added:—"I guess you'd better set 'im down for a mighty sight worse nor sick ef yer don't hurry up yer boots! He's got a ticket right straight through for t'other world, an' he's a-goin' it fast. Come—I'll show yer the way."

With a cold shudder Bion turned to Jack and asked him if he would go.

"Sartin, I'll go."

"Why—yer aren't afeard to go alone, be yer?" asked the boy.

"Look ye, my sweet lad—you just clap a stopper on that ere jaw-tackle o' your'n, or you'll find yerself with shootin'-stars in yer head—now mind."

The dirty messenger ran his eyes over Jack's stout, muscular form, and concluded to keep his tongue to himself, for he turned on his heel and walked away. He turned his head as he reached the street, just to see if the two were following him, and from that time till he reached the place of destination, he neither turned nor spoke. He swung along, whistling as he went; now kicking bits of paper and apple-cores from his path; then shuffling a trotting dance to the tune he whistled; anon striking up a vocal strain concerning "Sally and Jack," and a "Preacher in black;" and displaying in all his movements a freedom from conventional restraint which might have been refreshing had it not been for the exceedingly filthy state of the exhibitor.

The guide kept on up Catharine street to Chatham; thence to Orange; then on to Cross, on which, a few doors from Orange, he stopped before an old wooden house, and then turned to his followers.

"Here yer be, sailor-man and sailor-boy," he said. "Here's where yer'll find 'im. Here's whar Ma'am Duncan lives, an' Mister Barney was her boarder. Haint we got a garden down here? Aint it nice? Don't we live in rich housen, eh? Ye'd better go in ef yer goin'. Ef ye stop to hear me talk ye'll have to git a lease o' the sidewalk."

"Where is the sick man?" Jack asked this very quietly; but during the while he was edging his way up to the messenger, whom he caught by the arm with a grip that made him howl.

"Now, you jest show us the way to Driscol's room, you young lubber!"

"Look a-here—aint yer goin' to give me nothink ef I show yer up?"

"You show us up first."

With that the young ragamuffin entered the house, and bade them to follow him.

Bion had thought the home of Margery Grutt in about as dirty and filthy a place as there was in the city; but he found this locality so much worse, that the other seemed a paradise to it. It was terrible and it made him sick at heart. But his anxiety to see his kind tutor in a measure overcame the effects of the surrounding wretchedness, and instinctively keeping close to Jack he followed on.

The guide led the way to the second floor of the house, and having stopped before the first door he came to, he said:—

"Here yer be. This is the room. Now gin me somethink."

Jack put his hand in his pocket and drew out half-a-dollar.

"What'll ye do with this if I give it to ye?"

"O—I'll buy bread for my poor mother, sir. She's sick, sir, and haint got a bit of bread, sir!"

"You're amasin' chipper, seems to me, for a boy with a sick mother."

"How can I help it, sir?" the boy whimpered, wiping his right eye with his ragged, dirty sleeve. "Ef I didn't be chipper I should die with so much misery. I sing, and whistle, and dance, sir, acause I'm so hungry, sir; and I tries to forget it, sir. Oh, won't my poor mother be happy when I give her so much? Ef all gentlemen would be so good, there wouldn't be so much sufferin' down here. There wouldn't, indeed, sir!"

Jack couldn't resist this. There was honesty and natural affection in the boy, after all. He added another half-dollar; and while he did this Bion took out the same—two half-dollars—and they gave them—two dollars in all—to the boy. He seemed almost beside himself at first, and had struck into an extra double-shuffle ere he thought what he was up to.

"Now ye'll make a good use of that, me son."

"Oh, sir! my mother, sir!—my poor, poor mother, sir! I shall tell her, sir, who gave 'em to me. And who shall I tell her ye was, sir?"

"Tell her 'twas old Jack Wallace and Bion Bernard."

"I will, sir,—and she'll bless ye, sir. She'll pray for ye, sir!"

With this the boy turned and leaped down the stair-way two steps at a time. When he reached the bottom he turned half about, and, not being aware, probably, that his two friends were instinctively watching him, he placed his thumb to his nose and made peculiar gyratory motions with his fingers.

"What does he do that for?" asked Bion.

"I can't imagine, I'm sure," answered Jack. "It's some new way of actin' when you're happy, I s'pose."

"Hip, hip, hooray!" shouted the boy, as he dashed off into the street.

"He's very happy," suggested Jack.

After this they turned to the door and knocked, and presently a middle-aged woman came to answer the summons. She was meanly clad, but yet clean, and even neat; and her face must at some time have been very pretty.

"Is Mr. Driscol here?" asked Bion.

"Yes. Be you the ones he sent for?" The woman's voice was very pleasant.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well—come right in. He's well nigh gone—poor man! But he's a good man, gentlemen. This way, sirs."

BION ADMIRING CORA IN HER NEW ATTIRE.

The woman led the way into the first room, where there was a bed, a cooking-furnace of sheet-iron, and a few articles of other furniture; and passing on through this she entered a small bed-room where Barney Driscol lay.

Bion was shocked by the appearance of his old tutor. The dark eye was deeply sunken, but yet bright—supernaturally bright—while the other features all were marble-like and lifeless. He reached out his hand and smiled, and when he had grasped both his visitor's he motioned them to a seat.

"I'm glad you've come," he said, in a low, hollow tone. "The boy found you at Margery's, didn't he?"

"Yes. He met us at the door."

"I'm glad he found you. But you must excuse me for sending such a messenger. I could find no other."

"O—he's a very well-dispositioned boy," said Jack.

"He can behave himself if he's a mind to," resumed Driscol. "He's a bright little chap, but I'm afraid he'll never make much. He has no one to care for him"

"He has a mother," interposed the old sailor, suggestively.

"No. He has no parents, and no home. He lives wherever he can find a hole to crawl into; working where he can and will, and, I fear, doing worse when he has temptation and opportunity."

"But are you sure he haint got no mother?" said Jack, persuasively.

'Why—of course I'm sure. His father and mother both died in the city hospital of small-pox. But why do you ask?"

"O—noth'n' in particular," stammered Jack, trying to hide his chagrin. "I only was a thinkin' that he *ought to* have a mother—that's all."

"Yes—he'd be better off, no doubt; though I should hope he might have a better one than he had before. But the women are few who would own him."

Jack ventured to look into Bion's face, and Bion happened, at the same moment, to be making the same venture; and their mutual glances seemed to say,—"Guess we'd better keep silent on this subject!"

Bion had just turned to the bed when Driscol was seized with a sudden fit of coughing, which came upon him with fearful power. Jack raised him up to a sitting posture, and though he coughed more easily thus, yet he was severely racked and torn by the effort; and when it finally passed off he was so utterly exhausted, that it was several minutes ere he could speak. At length he reached out and took Bion's hand again, and said,—"God bless you!"

A few moments after this he turned to Jack.

"Mr. Wallace," he said, speaking in a painful, trying whisper, "I found this lad a poor withering plant of humanity, with the love of only one pure soul to brighten his path. I saw him, and I loved him. I found him needing instruction, and anxious to obtain it; and I became his teacher. During six long years I saw him almost every day, and did what I could to enrich and improve his mind. Now I must leave him to you. I feel almost as though I had the right to do this; for I had been, until you first saw him, his only guide and tutor. Margery was nothing of that to him. While I was with him he never heard an impure thought expressed by me. I feel that he will not from you."

"In course he won't," cried Jack, eagerly. "I love him too well for that."

"I believe you. And, I do assure you, it gives me great pleasure to be able to believe it. You will be careful of him; let him read when his duty will permit it; and one of these days you will give to the world a man who shall be an ornament to it."

"That's jest what I mean to do," returned the old sailor, warmly. "That's the very idee, sir. All I hope is, that I may be spared to see him grow up."

"God grant that you may be! For Bion's sake, I pray God to spare you!"

As Jack turned away to wipe his eyes the invalid was seized with another fit of coughing worse than the first. They helped him up to a sitting posture, and at a motion of his hand the boy gave him a phial that stood upon the little table. It contained a cough-mixture, prepared with laudanum; and a little of it had seemed to help him on former occasions, but it had no effect now.

The fit lasted some three minutes, though it seemed half an hour to them; and when it was passed he was very weak and faint, breathing with great pain and difficulty.

"Bion," he whispered, "you will tell Cora how I loved her. Oh! may God protect and bless the dear, beloved being! She is an angel, Bion—an angel! I would have sent for her, only I knew it would shock her to find me dying in such a place. You needn't tell her how you found me—only tell her where I have gone. It makes little difference now where the soul leaves its old worn-out tenement. Bion, you know what I told you last evening?"

"Yes," answered our hero.

"Well—I wanted to say one thing more. Aunt Margery has——"

Another fit of coughing interrupted him.

For a long time the terrible spasms shook his frame; but finally they began to grow less. The cough was not so heavy, nor so frequent. A few more deep, rattling efforts, and the cough was gone. The invalid gave a low gasp and sank back. His head rested upon the pillow, and his left hand was still in Bion's grasp.

"Why—my dear tutor, what makes your hand so cold?" the boy asked.

The man neither spoke nor moved.

"His hand is very cold!" Bion said, turning to his companion.

"But look at his eyes and lips!" whispered Jack, mysteriously.

"Jack!—he is dead!"

The boy dropped the cold hand and started back as he spoke.

"He is dead!" he repeated.

"God have mercy on his soul!" ejaculated the old sailor, fervently.

"Amen!" responded Bion.

A few moments they stood and gazed in silence upon the dead, and then Bion opened the door and called the woman in.

She came, and stood by the side of the bed. She took the leaden hand, and gazed upon the marble face. The eyes were partly open, and they gave an unpleasant look to the corpse. The woman closed them, and held them together for some moments.

"Good sir," she said, turning to Jack, and speaking in a half frightened, reluctant tone, "have you two pennies that I could put upon his eyes?"

"Here's somethin' heavier," replied Jack, producing two bright half-dollars.

"No, no, sir," the poor hostess quickly uttered "Not them—not them! They'd be stolen, sir, before another morning, for I can't watch them all the time. Pennies would be better, sir. I'd put on my own; but—but—I——"

She stopped and burst into tears.

"Are ye poor?" asked Jack, tenderly.

"O—very, sir. I have supported him, sir. He could not work. For some months he has done nothing but give lessons to a poor girl who could not pay him. It was a very young girl, and he loved her very much. He worshiped her, sir—verily worshiped her. She was all he seemed to live for; and he has been there to see her when he had to be helped down the stairs. He was a good man."

Jack took two pennies from his pocket, and having placed them upon the closed lids, he helped the woman tie up the drooping jaw.

"You'll keep them," he said, as the hostess handed the silver to him. "I don't want 'em."

"Stop a minute," interposed Bion. "I owe something here. The girl whom Mr. Driscol has been teaching is my—my sister. I am her only—a—the only one to whom she can look for help. I must pay for the lessons he has been giving her."

Quite a discussion followed this, and it was finally arranged that the woman should accept fifteen dollars, which she did with tears of gratitude. Then Jack insisted upon paying the expenses of the funeral, for Bion was determined that his old tutor should have Christian burial.

"Does this leave you all alone?" Jack asked.

"Yes, sir. This is the last of all I had to love. I was well off once." The woman stopped here and wiped her eyes, and then added,—"My husband died first. He was sick a long while, and when he died we had no money. Poverty drove me down here. But my husband received Christian burial, sir. In a little while my child sickened and died. It was a boy, sir—a good, bright boy; and he died when he was not quite six. It was very cold when he died—freezing cold. But he lies in consecrated ground. He was buried well!"

"Did it cost much to bury him?" asked Jack, as the woman came to a pause. He asked the question partly because he had a desire to know how much it would cost to bury Driscol, and partly to fill up the time.

The widow raised her head, and while a strange shade swept across her pale face she replied,—

"I don't know, sir. I didn't bury him, sir."

"Ah—you found friends then?"

"Yes—a—yes, sir. A man came and offered to bury him for me."

"Perhaps you'd like to have this poor man buried in the same place, ma'am?"

"O, no, sir. It couldn't be done. My boy, sir, was buried in a nice place. The man that buried him was rich. He took it all off 'm my hands. He wanted to bury him to suit himself. But I was at the funeral, sir. I was at the funeral! I wouldn't have let him had my boy only but he'd let me be at the funeral!"

The woman seemed to be strangely moved, and her speech was incoherent. Jack and Bion both felt a curiosity to know more about the burying of her boy, as her remarks would seem to indicate that there was something peculiar about it; but she was so much grieved that they asked her no more questions, save the simple request to know her name, which she informed them was Mary Duncan.

Jack promised to send some one to take charge of the funeral, and the two visitors then took their leave. The widow followed them to the hall, where she bade them adieu with tearful eyes, and an utterance choked by deep emotions of gratitude.

CHAPTER XXXV.

LEAVING AN OLD FRIEND.

Jack's first movement after leaving the house of death was to make inquiries for some competent and trustworthy person to take charge of Driscol's burial. He was directed to the agent of a charitable association, whom he found to be a very mild and accommodating sort of a person. The old sailor stated his business, and then the agent took a piece of paper and a pencil, and began to set down figures and reckon them up. He finally said that the actual outlays would be about ten dollars.

"Will ten dollars be enough, sir?" asked Jack.

"Plenty."

"And if I give you ten dollars now you will see that the poor fellow is respectably and religiously buried, won't you?"

"Will you not be present?" asked the agent.

"No, sir. I must go out of the city to-morrow morning."

"Well—I will attend to it. He shall be buried, sir, with full Christian rites."

Jack took out his old leathern purse from his bosom—one that he had worn suspended about his neck for over twenty years—and took therefrom a golden eagle. He hesitated a few moments, and then added a half-eagle to it, and as he handed the two pieces to the agent, he said,—

"There—you'd better take that—fifteen dollars—and if ye have any left ye can give it to some poor person who needs it."

"We have plenty of them, sir—plenty. Let me have your name, sir; for I shall consider five dollars of this as a donation. What name shall I write, sir?"

While the man was speaking he had taken down a book and opened it, and was ready to write the visitor's name.

"Never mind about any name sir. Jest say it was a seaman," replied Jack, nervously.

"Say it was good Jack Wallace!" interposed Bion, emphatically.

"Ah—Wallace—*John* Wallace, I presume?"

"No, sir. My name's *Jack*."

The agent smiled—then wrote the name—and then bowed very politely as the visitors turned away, assuring Jack, even after he had gained the street, that it should "be all right."

For some distance the two walked in silence. At length Bion looked up and said—

"What do you suppose that woman meant about burying her boy? She talked kind of curious, didn't she?"

"She did, sartin, me boy," returned Jack, quickly. "I was just a thinkin' o' that very thing. But I can't guess what she meant."

"It seemed to me," pursued Bion, "just as though she didn't have anything to do with his funeral herself. Didn't you notice how she said she went to the funeral?"

"Yes. I noticed."

"She seemed to speak as though she was allowed to be present—as though somebody else *permitted* her to attend."

"Yes,—I noticed, me boy. And now what do you make of it? What d'ye think she meant?"

"Why—I don't suppose she meant to tell us anything, only that her boy was decently buried. She was without money, and yet the boy was not only liberally buried, but buried where even your money wouldn't pay for burying Driscol. That's what struck me the most peculiarly."

"He was buried in a place where poor people could not be buried, I s'pose," suggested Jack.

"It is not necessarily so," responded Bion. "But he must have been buried where Mrs. Duncan cannot have a friend buried. That's the point, Jack. Just look at it: We know that money will open the gates of any burial-place which is not strictly private, and that no spot is so exclusive that a body may not be deposited in it for pay, except such spots as are already taken up for families."

"Yes—yes," said Jack—"I see. Though he saw nothing clearly as yet.

"But where the last of Mrs. Duncan's friends was laid, *the next one cannot be laid, even for money!*"

"Well. Go-ahead."

"Then don't you see that some one else must have buried her boy. He must have been put with another family. O—there are thousands of ways in a great city by which evil deeds are done, and evil deeds hidden!"

"But I don't exactly see what ye're drivin' at, me boy."

"Why—it's plain enough, Jack, that somebody wanted to make it appear that somebody else was dead and buried. A boy may have been murdered, and to hide the crime they found Mrs. Duncan's dead boy, and took him home with them, and then gave out that the murdered boy was sick and had died. By having the corpse of a boy of the same age they could carry out the deception easy enough."

"Oho—I see now. My eyes! what a chap you be to dig into such a thing, Bion."

"But it's very plain, Jack. If she hadn't said that Driscol couldn't be buried there, I shouldn't have thought so much of it. A rich man buried her boy—buried him in a nice place—to suit himself—but he *permitted* the mother to be present. She wouldn't have let him had the body only on the condition that she should be present! Don't you see how plain it looks?"

"Well—I declare—it does look plain now, Bion."

"I might not have thought of it so readily had I not read once of very much such a transaction."

This brought them to their hotel, where they took their dinner and supper all in one meal.

In the mean time Cora was carefully preparing for her flight. She had no compunctions at leaving her present home, for since Bion first left and went to sea, she had not been happy there only when Barney Driscol was with her, helping her on with her lessons. She thought of Barney, and wished he could go with her; and the only pang she felt was in the thought of going away without seeing him. She was thus pondering and reflecting when Margery came up. She heard the old woman's step upon the stairs, and when her door was opened she had a book in her hand.

"Ah, me leetle darlin', yer 'r readin' yet, eh?"

"Yes, Aunty. I love to read."

"Ye do? And ye've loved to have poor Barney Driscol teach ye, too, haven't ye?"

"Yes, Aunty—I have."

"Poor feller. He won't teach ye no more, darlin'."

Cora dropped her book and started up. The words came with an overpowering effect upon her. She knew her tutor had been very sick, and his words, when he was last with her, had given her warning of this.

"Is he dead?" she asked, in a whisper.

"Yes, me leetle darlin'. He died this arternoon. Bion and Jack Wallace was both there. They was sent for, and they went. Bion giv' Mrs. Duncan fifteen dollars to pay for the lessons poor Barney had given you. Wasn't he good?"

"Bion gave——? To pay for me?" uttered the girl, spasmodically.

"Yes. The poor woman hadn't got no money; and she had been a boardin' Barney for a long time—for more'n three years. She told 'em 'at he hadn't done no work to earn anything for ever so long. All he'd done was, to give you lessons 'cause he loved ye. So when Bion heer'd that he jest put his hand in his pocket and made her take fifteen dollars, which he said he gave her as so much due to Barney for teachin' you, and due from him to her for his board. And then Jack went and paid fifteen dollars more for the funeral expenses, so 't Barney might have good Christian burial. A little while arter Jack and Bion went away a man as has something to do with a charity society come in and said he'd been paid for doin' all the work of holdin' the dead man's funeral. He said Jack Wallace had paid him for it."

"Who told you all this, Aunty?"

"Mrs. Duncan has been around here herself. She wanted to see Bion."

"What for?" asked Cora, with natural curiosity.

"I don't know, exactly. She said she was tellin' him somethin' 'bout the death of her boy—a boy jest about his age. She acted kind o' funny about it. I couldn't make out what she was goin' to tell him, only I s'pected it was about her dead boy. I guess she was goin' to show him where he was buried."

"Why—what could she want to do that for!"

"I'm sure I don't know, me darlin'. P'r'aps she thought he 'd like to know. But I thought I 'd jest come up and let ye know 'at Barney was dead, so 't ye wouldn't be expectin' him no more."

A silence of some moments ensued, during which Margery seemed to be pondering upon something she wished to speak about. Finally she looked into Cora's face, and, with an evident attempt to exhibit a carelessness which she didn't feel, she said:

"It'll be kind o' lonesome here now, wont it, darlin'? With Barney dead, and Bion gone off to sea. It'll be real lonesome."

Cora made no reply, but gazed steadily into Margery's face.

"It 'll be drefful lonesome, me leetle dear darlin'. You won't know what to do. I've been a thinkin' 'at perhaps ye'd better go into the country somewhere."

Cora saw through the old woman's design.

"I should like to go into the country very much," she replied. "Would you go with me?"

"I don't know. But if I didn't I could find a real good family as would take ye. It would be much better than to stay hived up in this place. Only think: Green trees and bushes, and flowers, and birds, and all them purty things. Wouldn't it be nice?"

"O—very nice."

"Well—I think I'll let ye go, me darlin'. I know a real nice family as would be glad to have ye come and live with 'em. But I thought I'd jest come up and let ye know that Barney was dead."

With this Margery left the room.

For some time Cora wept with mourning grief for the death of her kind tutor. But when she became calm she felt glad that Margery had told her; and not only so, but she felt thankful that Barney had passed away while friends were near to see that his memory was honored. She knew that the sands of his life had nearly run out—that there was no recovery for him. This being the case she was thankful that she was thus relieved of the necessity of leaving him all alone.

By supper-time she was quite calm, and was able to converse with Margery without betraying any of the emotions she wished to keep to herself. The old woman talked about the country—praising its beauties and loveliness, and expatiating upon the advantages of country life. Cora ventured to ask if the country was so much finer in winter, because it was almost winter now.

"Aha—think o' the sleigh-rides, me darlin'."

Cora did think of them, and the glow came to her face, and a thrill of hope to her heart.

After supper the girl returned to her room, and began to pack up all the little things she wished to take with her. Bion had told her not to lumber herself up with any of her old clothes, and she concluded that she would not.

"I could wear this some, and thus save a better one," she said to herself, as she held up a thick woollen gown, which was faded and patched. "But Bion has plenty of money, and I know it will make him very happy to dress me well. Oh! good, noble Bion! I do love thee! God grant that I may always be worthy of thy love and honor!"

She put the old dress to her eyes and wept for some time. She could not help it. She was in one of those peculiar frames of mind when the least motion of the heart tips the tear-cup, and bedews the cheek.

Cora had several very fine books, and some small trinkets. Then there was her little desk and writing materials. But Bion had told her she had better not attempt to take them—they would be too cumbersome for her, and might be only the means of exposing her. So she concluded to leave them. But she took her books, and all the little compositions and duplicate letters she had written under Barney's tutorage. These she did up carefully with a few articles of clothing she had on hand which were very good, and which she could not wear away. When this was all done she undressed, placing her garments so that she should have no trouble in finding them, and having repeated her little prayer she got into bed.

At nine o'clock Margery came up and looked in.

"I am not asleep," said Cora.

The poor girl knew that the old woman had not always done as she should do; and she fully believed, moreover, that she was a hired party towards keeping her from her proper relatives; but yet she could not bear the thought of leaving her, probably forever, without saying one word.

"I've been thinking about the country, Aunty."

"Ah—have ye, me leetle darlin'?"

"Yes, Aunty."

"And what did ye think?"

"I thought if I should go away from you to live in the country I should always remember how kind you'd been to me;—and should pray for you; and should hope that you'd remember me!"

"So I should!" cried Margery, stooping over and kissing the girl. "And I wouldn't let ye go away into the country, only I know 'twill be for yer good, darlin'. O—I sartinly shouldn't let ye, only for that."

"I shall never forget you, Aunty. I shall always remember you; and if you ever wonder why I left you so readily, you'll remember that I had no friend here but you, and that I couldn't bear the thought of having you some day leave me among strangers!"

"O—I'll remember, me darlin'—I will, for sartin. Yer know it's only for yer good, sweet. There—good night

"Good night!"

Margery kissed her again and then turned away, and as she reached the door she muttered—"It's only for yer own good, darlin'."

Cora felt better now. She had written a few words, but that was not sufficient. She wished to speak—to hold her old guardian by the hand—once more ere she left. She lay quietly in her bed until she heard the clock strike eleven, and shortly after this she arose and commenced to dress. The moon was up, and though its direct beams did not penetrate her chamber, yet it gave her more light, so that she could see quite well. When she was all dressed she sat down and gazed out upon the moon-lit roofs. She did not wish to be obliged to wait in the court.

At length, however, when she judged that it lacked only twenty minutes of midnight, she took her bundle from beneath the bed and removed the shoes from her feet. She had kept them on while she sat by the window, because it was cold for her feet without them. She opened her door carefully, and stepped out into the entry where she listened. The first sound which struck her ear was the deep snoring of Black Peggy, in the attic; and by moving nearer to the head of the stairs she was able to hear Margery's heavy breathing from below. Of course the woman was asleep.

With cautious tread the girl descended the stairs, being careful to place her feet as near the outer edge as possible so as to prevent the creaking. She reached the kitchen, where she found the moonbeams resting upon the floor, and streaming into Margery's little bed-room. She hesitated a moment, for she must pass that open door. But the heavy, steady breathing assured her that the hostess slept, and with a quick, noiseless movement she glided past.

The door which opened from the kitchen into the hall was fast, but only by a single bolt, which was moved back without noise. The hall was gained, and only the front door remained between her and liberty. It was secured by a lock and two bolts. The key was in its place, and having laid her bundle down, she turned it without further noise than a low, dull click. Then the lower bolt was pulled back; but the upper one she could not reach from the floor.

For a few moments she was startled. She must return to the kitchen and get a chair. She thought awhile—she remembered that she had no time to waste, and that what must be done, must be done quickly. So she glided back to the kitchen, where she had the good fortune to find a chair without passing the open bed-room door. She had just taken it up when Margery's voice broke upon her ear. Her first impulse was to drop the chair and flee; but fortunately she remembered herself in time, and remained quiet.

"It's for yer own good, me darlin'. Them folks 'll be real good to yer. O—I wouldn't let ye go only for yer own good!"

She was talking in her sleep—that was all. Cora understood it in a moment as she distinguished the words; and as soon as the woman ceased speaking she moved back to the front door. With the help of the chair she reached the bolt easily, and slid it back. She then got down and moved the chair away, and opened the door without further difficulty. The moon was shining brightly, and as she gained the stoop she saw two dark forms approaching from a dark corner of the court. She was not frightened, for by the contrast in size between the two, she knew it must be Jack and Bion.

"Have you got all, dear Cora?" the boy asked, eagerly.

"Yes. I am all ready."

"Then we are safe! Come—come. Oh! there's joy before us!"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE LAKE-SIDE COTTAGE.

Jack Wallace took Cora in his arms, and the little party started for the hotel, where they arrived in safety. The stage for Albany was to start at five o'clock, so they had not much time for sleep. Yet they had a room for the girl, and one of the black cooks remained up on purpose to take care of her, Jack having made a previous arrangement with her to that effect.

But Cora was soon in her new bed, and though there were strange, and almost wild emotions whirling through her mind, yet she was ere long overcome by fatigue, and sank into a sweet sleep. She had dreams; and they were pleasant ones—so pleasant that when the kind black woman came and woke her up, she wished she could have slept only long enough to have finished her dream. However, it was after four, and she must be ready in season. When she was all dressed she was conducted down to the breakfast room, where she found Bion waiting for her.

The fresh eggs, and nice, sweet butter, and the fragrant coffee, were very good, and she ate quite heartily. After the meal was over Bion led her into the parlor where she was to prepare. As they passed through the hall the door was open to the yard, and the frosty air came in chill and uncomfortable.

"It is very cold," said the girl, with a shudder.

"Yes. There is quite a frost on the ground," returned Bion.

"It will be cold riding, wont it? I didn't think how cold it was."

"But you can bundle up warm, you know, my dear Cora."

"Alas! I—— Yes—I can bundle up, Bion. O—I shall get along very well."

Bion understood the generous disposition which checked the complaint she was on the point of uttering, and he blessed her in his heart, though he spoke it not aloud.

When they reached the parlor Cora took up her straw hat, but Bion pulled it gently from her.

'Not that this morning, my dear. Here—this will be much better." And as he spoke he opened a small band box which stood upon the table and took out a fine fur hat, and one of much value.

"Why—Bion!"

"——sh! Only love me, Cora, and take it. I hope you did not think I would take you on such a journey without good warm clothing."

"I didn't think anything about it," returned the happy girl, with tears in her eyes.

"And now this," resumed Bion, throwing open a paper parcel, and taking therefrom a very handsome broadcloth cloak trimmed heavily with otter fur, and lined with silk. "Here—let me help you. Put in your arm here. There—don't that set prettily? Just look in the glass."

She looked into the large, low mirror, and for some moments she was totally unable to speak. She knew that she looked now just as those fortunate girls did of whom she had read. She felt how warm and comfortable the beautiful garments were, and she had just made up her lips to speak, when Bion pushed her gently back into a chair, and then kneeled down and slipped a pair of high fur boots upon her tiny feet. She waited until he had arisen, and then she sprang forward and threw herself upon his bosom, and there told the gratitude in tears which she could not tell in words.

"Oh! I am very happy!" she finally succeeded in saying. "How shall I ever repay you?"

"Only love me, Cora. Only love me. I ask no more."

"Love you? Oh! I pray Heaven I may not forget my Father there in my holy love for thee!"

"There, Cora," the boy cried, kissing her again, "I am much more than repaid now. But—hark!"

At this moment came the loud voice of the stage-driver——"*All aboard!*" And then followed the cry through the house—"*Stage! Stage! stage for Albany! All aboard!* Look sharp there!"

In a little while the passengers had all taken their seats. There were only six inside—three beside our little party—so they had plenty of room. It was very dark, and as they rolled away from the hotel Cora could only see the sombre walls of the great buildings. Ere long these were passed, and the eye now reached away into the open darkness on either hand. The sun burst over the landscape just as they were crossing King's Bridge, and as the coach-wheels struck the hard road again Jack informed his young companions that they had left Manhattan Island, and were now in West Chester county. Cora clapped her little hands with joy, for never before had her eyes dwelt upon a scene so lovely.

The foliage was not yet dead, and many of the trees still retained much of their green garb. The fields were not so verdant as in the warmer months, but to the freed prisoner they afforded such charms as she had never before even dreamed of. And then the broad river, which ever and anon flashed back the golden sunbeams through the openings in the trees; and the murmuring brooks; and the ponds; and the quiet farm-houses, all presented to her scenes of strange and startling interest. She clasped one of Bion's hands in her own, and murmured forth her thoughts in words of love and gratitude.

At ten o'clock the stage stopped to change horses, and Jack made arrangements for himself and companions to ride upon the outside. The sun was now well up, and the air was warm and agreeable, the soft breeze which came sweeping along from the southward and westward bearing upon its bosom all the sweets which Autumnal nature can afford.

Late on the evening of the second day the stage arrived in Albany, and on the following morning our trio took passage on board a fine canal boat for Montezuma. During this trip Bion and Cora enjoyed themselves much; only once in a while the girl would sink into a fit of deep thought and appear sad and troubled. Both Bion and Jack had noticed this while on the stage, but supposing it to be the result of having left an old home, they said nothing about it, but merely tried to overcome it by kindness and pleasant conversation.

"I shouldn't think Cora would be homesick at leaving such a place," remarked our hero to Jack. They stood near the cabin companion-way, while Cora was seated at some distance from them by the side of the boat. She was sad and troubled.

"Ah," responded Jack, with a shake of the head, "there's no tellin' how one may feel that's got sich a tender heart as she's got. Home is home, ye know, me boy."

"I know," said Bion. He thought a moment, and then added, with peculiar feeling,—"But *I* am with her. I should think——"

"Think what, me boy?"

"I don't know, Jack. I was thinking that she loved me well enough—to—to——"

"Aha—I see, me boy. Ye're afeared she don't love ye as ye hoped she did, eh?"

"O, no, Jack—not that," quickly returned Bion. "No, no. I know she loves me dearly. But—but—then I thought she would be more happy in my company."

"Why—you little fool!" uttered the old sailor, in a tone of sharp reproof. "What are ye thinkin of? Why—her bright eye is never so bright as 'tis when you are by her; and her only pure joy is when you are by to share it!"

This was considerable for Jack to say, and it fairly put him out of breath. He seemed to feel, after he had spoken, as one would feel who had accidentally "spoken aloud in meeting."

But ere anything further could be said the sound of carriage wheels was heard in the distance, accompanied by a man's voice, in loud, eager tones. The boat had left Schenectady some two hours before, and this appeared to be some one who had missed it. The vehicle was an open wagon, with two men in it, and drawn by a single horse; and one of the men was hallooing for the boat to stop, which was very soon done.

As the boat stopped Bion turned his gaze again upon Cora. She had started up from her seat, and was very pale and agitated. Both he and Jack were quickly at her side.

"What is it? What is the matter?" cried the youth, eagerly.

"O!—Let us go below!" gasped the girl.

"But what is the matter, Cora?"

She cast a frightened glance towards the coming wagon, and then sank upon Bion's shoulder, murmuring as she did so,—

"Oh! Don't let them take me back! I should die if they did!"

A strange pang smote upon Bion's heart. How he had wronged the pure being, even by his selfish thought.

"Take ye back?" repeated Jack, in surprise—"And have ye feared that?"

"O, yes. How could I help it?"

"And did ye think these people was a comin' arter ye, darlin'?"

"Aint they coming for me?" the girl quickly asked, taking hope from Jack's tones.

"A comin' for *you?* Why no. It's a man as has lost the boat. Why, what a leetle scare-crow! But come here, me darlin'—come here, both of ye—and sit down."

By this time the wagon had come up. A large trunk was lifted on board; then one of the occupants of the carriage followed it, while the other turned the team about and drove back, and the boat started on its way again.

"Tell me, bright-eyes," commenced Jack, "have ye been fearin' that somebody 'ud come and carry ye back?"

"Yes. O! I couldn't help it."

"And is it that as has made ye sorrowful like at times all the way?"

"Yes—O—I should die if they took me now!"

"Why—ye don't know 'at they can't take ye, darlin', do ye?"

"Can't they?"

"Why, no—bright-eyes. They'd no more dare to come for ye than they'd dare to cut their own fingers off. It 's a piece of reg'lar right down villainy, their takin' ye, in the first place. No, no, sweet creetur—don't ye be afeard any more. They wouldn't dare to come for ye. And even if they did, they'd come a hopin' 'at we didn't know nothin' about yer bein' took by 'em when ye was a leetle baby. So now brighten up, sweet. Brighten up, an' don't ye make Bion unhappy no more."

"Bion?—unhappy?" uttered the beautiful girl, gazing from the old man to the youth. "Oh—I have not made *you* unhappy!" And as she spoke she threw her arms about Bion's neck.

"No, nó, Cora,—not unhappy," the young lover said. "Only it made me sorry to see you sad, because I thought you were home-sick."

Cora looked up with an expression of mingled surprise and pain.

"*Homesick!* she repeated, taking both his hands, and gazing almost reproachfully into his face. "And did you think I could be homesick with *you*—homesick because I had left my prison?—because you had freed me from it and were by my side? O, Bion—you shouldn't have thought that!"

"But I wont think so any more, Cora;—so you'll forgive me, wont you?"

He was easily forgiven; and from that hour both he and Cora were very happy; and the other passengers watched them with deep interest. They were supposed to be the son and daughter of Jack Wallace, as Jack had engaged passage for himself and two children.

Upon reaching Montezuma our little party took a stage once more, and after a pleasant ride of one day they arrived at a small village where they stopped all night; and in the morning Jack ordered a private team. An open wagon, drawn by two horses, was soon at the door, and into this our travelers were handed

The ride was now through one of the most beautiful sections of country to be found anywhere; and when the broad, bright bosom of Cayuga Lake was opened to their gaze both Cora and Bion were in extacies. When they reached the shore of the lake the road turned and ran along by its margin, and Cora's feelings burst forth in happy song.

By-and-by they saw a little white cottage peeping out from among great chestnut trees, and as they came nearer to it, and saw the beautiful scenery that surrounded it, and saw the spire of a church, and the tops of other houses in the distance, Cora could hardly restrain herself.

"O! what a lovely place!" she cried.

"It seems like some of the places we have read about in fairy books," returned Bion.

"Aye, me sweet ones," added Jack, while the tears started to his eyes, "there's where my money is—and there's where I keep my treasure. When my mates have wondered why I didn't jine 'em in their sprees they didn't know that I paid for sich a home as this; nor they didn't know what a treasure I'd got in it neither."

"Your house?" cried Bion and Cora in concert. "O—is it yours, Jack?"

"Yes, me sweets—it's mine. But ye haint half seen it yet. Wait."

As the old sailor spoke the carriage turned up into a long lane, flanked upon either side by huge chestnuts, and bounded by two neat-faced stone walls. In a few moments more the team was stopped at the steps that led to the piazza, and an old lady made her appearance at the door. She was a portly woman, with that healthy corpulence which seems always to be the result of an easy, contented soul, and a good heart. But had there been a question on this point her face would have set the matter at rest. That face was a genial, bright, loving face; full of honest good nature and open benevolence. She raised the huge silver spectacles from her nose and rested them above the frill of her white cap; and as she did so Jack leaped from the carriage.

On the next instant the old lady and the sailor were clasped in each other's arms, and Bion and Cora could see their tears mingling together, and hear their murmurings of joy and blessing. "My dear, dear boy!" and "My own dear mother!"

The children gazed on until their eyes were so full that they could gaze no longer, and then they clasped each other about the neck and wept outright.

Neither Bion nor Cora knew much more until they found themselves in a neatly furnished, comfortable sitting-room. They heard Jack say—"They are mine now, mother; and I love them very much."

"Orphans, be they?" asked Mrs. Wallace.

"Orphans, mother, till now; but we wont let 'em be orphans any more."

But when the old lady felt Cora's arms wound about her neck; and felt her warm tears upon her cheek; and heard a sweet voice say—"I shall love you, and try to be very good. Wont you be my mamma, and be good to me, and love me?" When she felt and heard this, she pressed the beautiful girl to her bosom, and said she should be her own dear, darling child.

The team had been sent back, and as soon as the trunks and boxes had been brought in the party sat down, and the story of the past was told. But Jack did not tell all the dangers to which he and Bion had been exposed. He never told his mother of his most fearful passages in life, because they would only make her uneasy. He told all, however, that was necessary to bring out Bion's heroic conduct, and concluded by relating the private histories of the two children as clearly as he could.

Dinner was ready by the time the story was told, and while they eat, the hostess had a hundred questions to ask. By-and-by Bion and Cora learned to call her "Grandmother," and she called them her little grandchildren. She loved them from the first; and as she became more acquainted with their noble, generous, and virtuous qualities, she began to forget that they were not of her own blood.

It was on the second morning after their arrival, and Bion and Cora were together on the piazza. The boy placed his arm about his companion's neck, and earnestly asked—

"Cora, you will be happier here than in your old home?"

"Oh! I cannot tell you how happy I am!" she replied, as she gazed up and met Bion's loving look. "Life seems more valuable now. When I used to read about the pleasures and enjoyments of society it seemed a sort of imaginary state; but I can see it all now. The earth is very beautiful; and when I pray now, I can feel how good God is. It didn't use to be so before."

"I hope we shall be happy henceforth," said the boy, still holding his companion to his bosom.

Cora pondered a moment, and then looking up she answered, while a radiant light dwelt in her dark, lustrous eyes—

"We will be good, and try to deserve it, Bion. We can do no more!"

"God will do the rest, be sure!" pronounced a tremulous voice behind them; and on turning they beheld Mrs. Wallace.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT]

ON BREAKING A MARRIAGE ENGAGEMENT.

In courtship it unfortunately frequently happens that the lady feels herself compelled to retire from the engagement into which she probably entered with the most glowing anticipations of future happiness. The peculiar circumstances under which she may be placed will, of course, dictate to her the deportment she should assume. But her chief care should be that every step she takes should be consistent with her sense of propriety, and the delicacy of conduct required on all occasions, even the most trying, from a lady. It is very easy to charge her with caprice and fickleness, nay, even wanton treachery; so that whenever she has satisfied herself that the engagement ought to terminate, she cannot be too guarded or scrupulous, for not only will her determination be severely scrutinized, and by its disagreeable associations expose her to suspicion, but there will not be wanting those who will feel themselves justified in employing censure. Where there is cruelty and disregard for a solemn tie exhibited, the lady scarcely ever succeeds in removing the stain from her character. Inconstancy in a lady is viewed with more severity than in one of the opposite sex, and, we should feel inclined to think, very properly so; for, if tolerated, it would be holding out a premium to the worst species of levity, and tend to lower women in the high estimation of those whose kindness and affection they prize so highly. But where the lady considers it absolutely necessary to consult her honor and peace of mind by repudiating all idea of the contemplated union, good taste, delicacy, and the large humanity of her nature, should dictate to her the duty that the withdrawal should be effected in the way least calculated to inflict unnecessary pain, or add to the bitter feeling of disappointment which must naturally follow such a step. Should the gentleman persist in his addresses, the best course for her to pursue will be to consult her friends and natural protectors, who, by a judicious interference, will put an end to the annoyance. In all these cases a large discretion must be exercised, and nothing done hastily, or under the influence of passion. The soundness of this advice will be obvious when it is reflected that the lady may be influenced by malicious misrepresentation from the envious, or may have committed herself to a prejudice having no foundation at all in fact. Candid, warm-hearted men frequently expose themselves to the machinations of the evil-disposed, and in love are unable, or disdain, to fight the jealous and the covetous with their own weapons. They are so pure in their own love, and so firm in their faith in that of the lady, that they are not gifted with the sagacity to perceive the approach of the storm, and when its first breathings fall on their ardent hopes they merely entreat and implore—

"Maiden, with violet breath to me impart
At least the promise of a milder day,"—

and depart from the faintly clouded scene, satisfied that on the morrow all will be sunshine again. This trusting confidence is frequently abused, and the simplest actions of a man whose greatest faults may be an excess of candor and a constitutional carelessness and indifference to trifles, tortured and twisted into every variety of shape but the originals. To meaner things, he walks through life blindfolded; and scandal, with her venomous tongue, plays him many a sorry trick. His heart—

"Generous, noble—noble in its scorn
Of all things low or little; nothing there
Sordid or servile"—

cannot recognize petty deeds, or acknowledge that there are such vile inhabitants of the human breast as craft and cunning. Such a man pursues his way to the music of his own ardent impulses, and animated by the glowing conviction that the object of his fervent devotion—

——"Fresh as a flower just blown,
And warm with life, her youthful pulses playing,"—

is of a nature kindred to his own—loving, trusting, and faithful. It is such fine dispositions as these that envy and jealousy love to stab in the dark; and we would put our young lady readers on their guard against all the hints, surmises, and inuendoes which may be leveled at the characters of such men.

TO ——.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

About the purple mountain-hights
 The mellow tints of sunset weave
Their gorgeous spell of glooms and lights,
 Whilst mournfully the eve,

Beyond the fading crystal walls—
 That shine betwixt the night and day—
Sits in her glorious palace halls,
 And weeps her life away.

The wind, with silver lyre unstrung,
 And touching soft some plaintive bars,
Sings, whilst the sweet moon walks among
 The blossom of her stars.

And whilst the wild strains come and go,
 Like echoes of a summer sea—
I answer with a moan—for oh,
 My spirit pines for thee!

When will our ideal dream of good,
 Merged in a perfect, real bliss,
Burst in a bloom of happy blood,
 Beneath our meeting kiss?

When will the mists betwixt us twain,
 Be swept aside forevermore,
And where the shadows long have lain,
 Reveal the starry shore?

DEAD MAN'S COTTAGE.

A TALE OF OTHER DAYS.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

CHAPTER I.

And this was what I read in the yellow, and time-worn manuscript, which rustled like dead leaves in my hand.

"The moonlight was falling on the path that led up to the door of my new home, when I alighted from my horse at the gate, and looked around me. It was a small dark cottage, with a plantation of fir-trees behind it, and four cross-roads meeting just in front. At the junction of these roads, a stone cross was planted, which had evidently been standing for many years, as it was overgrown with moss and lichen, and on one of the arms a robin had built her nest."

I looked up in sudden amazement. The house of which the writer spoke, was my temporary home—and there, just beyond the gate, were the four cross-roads, the stone cross, and some remains of the robin's nest, still swinging in the breeze! What did it mean?

"Some strange fancies took possession of my mind as I gazed around and noted this peculiarity in the landscape. At the crossing of four roads, I had always been told, in my childhood, it was customary to bury the criminals who had suffered the full rigor of the law. It was an old woman's superstition, I know, that possessed me—but it seemed that I could imagine, far down beneath that cross, the form of a dead man, with a stake thrust through his heart. When I leaned over the gate, and saw a long and narrow mound at its foot, I was certain that it was so, although at the same time, common sense taught me to the contrary, and made me smile at my folly."

I laid down the paper and looked out at the stone cross. The daisies were growing thickly all around it, but at its foot they seemed springing from a trench—their heads were lower than those around them. I went out boldly—for the afternoon sun was shining in the sky—and gathered some from each place. The stems were alike in length. This irregularity, therefore, must proceed from some other cause—and that, the sinking of the grave where the felon was buried. I shuddered, as I thought of him then with the stake driven through his heart. I came back, and began to read again.

"But I was not to be driven from my purpose by a grave. I had entered that solitude in search of peace—and in the low-roofed cottage before me, it might, perhaps, be found. I unfastened the gate—wondering, as I did so, whose fingers had touched it last, and went up through the tall grass to the house. The door was fastened with a rusty padlock, to which I had the key. It creaked dismally as I entered, and the threshold, sloping suddenly downward, sent me headlong into the room. A thousand echoes sounded through the old house as I fell upon one knee.

"When the noise and dust had subsided, I struck a match, lit a small pocket taper which I carried with me, and looked around. The room in which I stood was large and gloomy. The walls were paneled, and painted a dark green—the casements were shattered—the floor loose, and creaking beneath my step, and the air full of floating cobwebs, that hung from the walls and ceiling, swaying about with every breath of wind. Several large rats ran across the floor as I stood there; a great toad sat close in the corner, blinking at the unwonted light, and a fat, bloated spider fell from the ceiling upon my coat. I brushed him off with a shudder, and passed into the next room."

I looked over my shoulder. Yes—he had described the room faithfully. It was the same now, though the rats and the toad were gone, and the spider's web had been brushed away. But in the inner-room—the room which I had chosen as my favorite nook for reading or study—what would he discover there?

"It was much smaller than the other—lighter and more cheerful. Through the broken casements came the perfume of the red roses which grew outside, and the moonlight fell in broken patches on the floor. This room was also paneled, but it was painted prettily—some light delicate tint, that was more like dove-color than anything else I can call to mind, while the floor looked like clean green marble. In this room I found the few articles of furniture which I had ordered—a table—some chairs—a stove—a book-case, and my writing desk. I flung myself down in an easy chair that stood beside the window, and inhaled the fragrance of the roses while I surveyed my new domain.

"Suddenly my eyes chanced upon an object which made me start and sit upright in my chair. My little taper was burning on the table opposite me, and above it—right above it—a face seemed growing out of the panel to confront me. A dark, swarthy Italian face, with long snakey locks of black hair falling around the hollow cheeks, with piercing, evil black eyes, that seemed to look me through and through. A dull red glow seemed to pervade the whole face, as if fire was kindled behind it—and through the lips, half-parted in a sardonic smile, I saw the gleam of white, wolfish teeth, sharp and regular.

"For a moment I sat motionless, and heard my own heart beat. Then I mustered courage to take up the lamp and gaze at the thing still nearer. Pshaw! It was only a picture, painted on the panel, and the dull, red glow, was owing to some strange fancy of the artist. He had made the back ground both lurid and murky, and the pale face stood out from it in bold relief. I sighed a sigh of ineffable relief, when I found what it really was, and went out to care for my horse, who began to neigh and stamp impatiently. I saw him safely bestowed for the night, and coming back, found my own small cot placed in a bed-room which opened out of that which contained the picture, and which I dignified by the name of study.

"It was not late when I extinguished my taper and laid down to sleep—but the moon had mounted high in the heavens before I had closed my eyes. I had never thought myself a fanciful or imaginative man; my nerves I had always supposed, were proof against all danger, seen or unseen—yet some strange presentiment haunted me, and that face was close beside me all the time. To me it seemed as the face of a fiend.

"I do not know that I should have slept till day-break, had it not been for a neigh from my horse, who also seemed restless. Strange as it may seem, that soothed me with a sense of companionship and safety—and I found the repose I so much needed."

The picture of the Italian face had never been removed from the panel on which it was painted. I got up from my seat in the open door, (for as the story progressed I dared not read it in the house,) and went in to look at it. Many a time had it startled me, but never so much as then. A new expression seemed stamped upon the face—the lurid glow deepened and darkened, and the thin lips smiled more sardonically than ever. I remember thinking, as I stood there, that it only needed a pair of horns projecting beneath that tangled black hair, and a deep furrow upon the brow, as if a hot iron had been across it, to make a faithful picture of the arch-enemy—of that fallen angel who was cast out from Heaven, and whose haughty soul, even the torture of Hades could scarcely hold in check.

I dared not look at it long, but went back to the open door, where the sunshine, and the blue sky, and the happy songs of birds, seemed in a measure to keep me company. And the manuscript went on:

"My forebodings had all vanished when I woke the next morning and found the sun shining gloriously into my room. Through the day I had no leisure to think of mysteries, so busy was I in getting my little household into order. By nightfall all was settled as it should be, and having visited my good steed, and given him his supper, his nightly bit of sugar, and his good night caress, I closed the gate of the little yard behind me, and set off for a walk.

"The moon was up—it was a glorious night. I could have read the finest print by that clear open light. I passed along the grass-grown road, with my hands clasped behind me, and my head bent upon my breast, singing a song I had heard in foreign lands, in my youth. Now and then I fancied that I heard a step behind me, and a voice joining with mine in the song, but when I looked around I was always alone.

"The road led me up a green hill, crowned with maples, while the highway ran round its bases, with a broad swift river flowing just beside it. I paused upon the summit to hear the murmur of the water. Before me I saw a grass-grown tomb, whose iron door seemed to have been closed for centuries, while just beyond, the white stones of a church-yard were sleeping peacefully in the moonbeams."

Well did I know that quiet place. Often, during the long hours of a summer's afternoon, had I lingered there among the mossy headstones, gazing down upon the road and river below, twining the roses that grew wild within the enclosures; or, reading some favorite book, as I sat close within the shelter of the old wall. But at night I always avoided it—it was a lonely spot.

"I leaned over the crumbling wall," this strange man went on to say, "and mused silently over the sleepers who were resting there. How was it with them now? How was it with those whom *I* had loved and lost? Did they remember me in their new home? Had they one thought of him to whom their very memory was a torture, so deeply had he mourned their loss?

"While I asked myself these questions, I heard a step behind me. Turning quickly round, I saw a tall man, dressed in black, coming towards me. *The door of the tomb was open*—had he come from there?

"He greeted me with easy familiarity, but there was something so unearthly in his aspect, that I could not answer him. His face was pale and thin—his hair long and black, and hanging upon his shoulders in neglected masses—his eyes, black, gloomy, and terrible. I thought of the mysterious picture in my study. Feature by feature, it was re-produced here before me!

"'You may well be startled,' he said, with a careless laugh. 'I come from a suspicious locality—but make yourself easy. Though I have just emerged from the tomb, I do not always dwell there. Do you still hesitate? There is a hand of flesh and blood for you—will you take it?'

"He stretched out a white, thin, and bloodless hand. A diamond ring of great lustre sparkled on one of the long fingers. Ashamed of my momentary weakness, I took it in mine, but dropped it the next moment with a shudder. It was cold as ice.

"He smiled sarcastically.

"'The air of that underground chamber yonder is famous for cooling the blood, I believe.'

"'But, who are you? how came you there?' I stammered. 'The door looked to me as if it never could be opened.'

"'The easiest thing in the world,' he said, carelessly. 'If you will step inside with me, you will see why I am there.'

"It was a mad idea, but the strange adventure thrilled me with a kind of pleasure.

"'Lead on—I will follow you,' I said.

"We went down two narrow moss-grown steps, and stood within the entrance of the tomb. In the vault beyond a fire was burning beneath a crucible, and several old and worm-eaten manuscripts were thrown carelessly around. A child's coffin was standing beside the fire; but it was empty, and only used as a seat. Far back, in the distance, I could see the moist earth on the sides of the tomb glisten in the dull light of the dying fire, like countless eyes that were watching me.

"My strange companion left me standing beside the door, and going forward, took the crucible from the fire. He shook it, looked earnestly into it, poured a molten mass from it into a broad ewer that stood near by, and stirred the liquid metal with a small rod of iron.

"'It is in vain. I have failed once more,' I heard him mutter, and then the rod fell from his hands, and he sat down, listless and despondent, on the little coffin.

"'You are an alchemist,' I said, suddenly, thinking I had found the clue to his choice of so strange a retreat.

"'Yes,' he answered, looking up at me with interest. 'For fifty years—fifty years, I have been seeking for that which shall turn all things to gold—and I have never found it yet. But never mind—the day must come—must come, and will.'

"He rose from his seat, raked the hot ashes over the still glowing coals, put crucible and ewer carefully away, and led me out of the vault. With one push of his seemingly fragile hand he set the iron door of the tomb in its socket, and fastened it. It still looked as if years had gone by since it had been opened.

"'You have great strength,' I said, admiringly.

"'And it has been employed in a good cause,' he answered, with a hard laugh.

"He fastened the last bolt, and turned away, saying—

"'All is safe till I come again. No one will ever think of looking there for any tidings of *me*.'

"Side by side we took our way down the hill, and over the lowly grass-grown road. We did not speak till we reached the gate of my cottage yard. Then he paused, and leaned over the fence a moment.

"'You have a pleasant home,' he said, looking at the window where the taper was burning, in readiness for my return.

"'I like it, such as it is. But it is late—will you not rest beneath my roof to-night?'

"'No, no—my way lies yonder,' he said, pointing by the old stone cross.

"'It is a lonely road.'

"'It is. And strange stories are told of this house sometimes. Years ago, when you were a boy, a man was hung in the town yonder,' and he pointed over the hill. 'He lived in this house once; and, would you believe it? the fools will have it, that he is buried here where the cross roads meet. But you and I know better.'

"He laughed a horrid laugh, and his eyes shone green and baneful as he turned them on me.

"'Yes, we know better,' I answered, quietly, though my very blood was chilled within me.

"He wrung my hand in his cold fingers, muttered a hasty good-night, and strode away. I hurried along the path that led to the door. The rusty lock delayed me a moment, and when I had opened the door, and turned to look after him, he was gone! The moon shone clear and bright, on road, and tree, and hill, but of him there was no trace! I laid down that night with an unquiet heart."

CHAPTER II.

"Mystery was around me. Whichever way I turned my steps something puzzled, and perplexed, and haunted me. The old house itself, which I had thought so quiet, was full of sounds. As I sat in my study, absorbed in a favorite book, I could hear steps upon the loose boards of the upper floors, or dismal knocks from the cellar, as if some one was nailing a coffin there. Into these regions I had never penetrated; I had no use for them, and had hardly deemed them worth my notice. But now that the low whisperings, which I had at first attributed to the winds, became audible, even when the winds were hushed; now that I could distinctly hear something lift the latch of my bed-room door, and step around the room, though at the same time my straining eyes could discern nothing in the gloom—I thought it best to search out everything, and know what I had about me.

"While I was preparing matches, tapers, and some other necessaries, on the morning I had devoted to the investigation, a quick knock came at the door. I opened it, half fearing my ghostly friend—the image of the picture—would stand before me. But no. In his place was a stout, ruddy, hale old man—the proprietor of the place, who had come to see how I was pleased with my new quarters. I welcomed him gladly. He was a stern, matter-of-fact, practical old fellow. In his presence I could be calm, and quiet, and cool. There was nothing about him to bewilder and mystify me; but much to make me more like myself than I had been for days before.

"I told him what I was about to do. He eyed me shrewdly, took up a basket and shovel near him, and opened the door of the cellar. I knew, then, by his manner, that it was not all fancy, that there was some actual foundation for the sounds I had heard.

"We went down the dark and crumbling stairs. The faint gleam of the taper failed to light the gloomy cavern in which we found ourselves, and we sat down, at the foot of the steps, till our eyes became accustomed to the faint light.

"'You have heard something here that sends you down on this search, I take it,' said Mr. Moorhouse, as he poked the moist earth up with his cane.

"'I have. And something which I do not intend to hear again, unless I know the reason of it.'

"A low, muffled knock came on the wall beside us, as I spoke.

"'Lord save us! Is that it?' exclaimed Moorhouse, starting.

"'Something like it, I believe.'

"We sat in silence for a time, but nothing more came.

"'Who used to live here, long ago?' I asked, at last.

"'One Bothwell, I believe.'

"'And before him?'

"Moorhouse hesitated a moment, and then answered, frankly—

"'My lad, I'll not deceive thee. Years ago, when I was but a boy, the house was tenanted by Morelli—Antoine Morelli—who was hung at last, and rightly he deserved it! He was a queer knave, and used to potter by the hour over a kind of kettle, thinking he was going to find gold at the bottom. At last he murdered a man here, in this very house—don't start so, man—was tried, condemned, hung, and lies buried on t'other side of the fence, under the stone cross. Now you have the whole story!'

"'Not quite,' I answered, turning sick and faint. 'He walks!'

"A deep sepulchral voice seemed to echo the words, at my elbow, and Mr. Moorhouse fairly bounded in his seat.

"'Did you hear that, lad? I believe, in my very soul he is here close beside me, at this moment.'

"I could see better now, and the old man's ruddy face had grown white. 'Moorhouse,' I said, calmly, 'in this house I shall never stay another night. Yet we wont be frightened away from this just yet.'

"'No—we wont!' and summoning his English courage to his aid, he wiped his forehead with his handkerchief, and planted his feet doggedly against the step on which we were sitting.

"'The other night,' I continued, 'if ever I saw living man, I saw Antoine Morelli—and conversed with him, too.'

"'Eh? What?'

"'He came from an old tomb up on the hillside. I followed him into it, and there were his crucible, his books, his divining-rod.'

"'Lad—lad'—ejaculated the old farmer, growing still paler—'you are describing what was in the old tomb thirty years ago. But it has never been there since. I have seen it empty with my own eyes, and the door was nailed fast to the rock.'

"It is strange how often, when we are hearing a frightful story, some chance word may startle us, even when the tale has failed to do so. What he said about the nails struck a cold chill to my very heart.

"'Nevertheless,' I persisted, 'I saw it all on that night. And the man who was with me opened and shut that heavy door as if it had been a wicker gate.'

"'Describe him.'

"'Go and look at the head which is painted on the wall in the room above us.'

"'Does it look like him?'

"'It is a perfect portrait.'

"'Then you *have* seen him,' he said, with startling emphasis, 'for he painted it himself, before he died. And do you know,' he added, sinking his voice into a low whisper, 'time and again we have tried to wash the painted image off—but it sticks like blood, and will have to stay there till the end of time—unless something stronger than soap and sand is discovered!'

"'But why does he not rest, now he is in his grave?' I asked.

"'Satan only knows. It may be, though—Moorhouse mused a moment, and then turned and faced me. 'My lad, I have heard it said that more than one murder has been committed here by him. In the darkest corner of the cellar yonder, I have seen a pile of earth that does not look just right. Shall we see what is there?'

"'I will go with you,' I answered. Only a few nights before I had followed a dead man into a tomb—I was not likely to fail a living one now.

"As we set foot in the corner, the low, ominous knocking—which I had so often heard while sitting up stairs—commenced, on all sides of us, but we would not turn back.

"'Through my life I have feared neither man nor devil,' said Moorhouse, stoutly, 'and it shall not be said that I fled now.'

"He struck the spade into the earth. A hollow groan echoed through the cellar, and he started back.

"'I thought just then I had cut into a man's heart,' he said, in a trembling voice. 'Did I tell you that Morelli was buried with a stake through his?

"'No—but I guessed as much. Give me the spade.'

"I snatched it from him, thrust the lamp into his hand, and setting my teeth, labored with desperate energy. Sights and sounds were not wanting around us. Now a pale gleam of light would play around us—then all would be dark as night, but for the starry flame of our lamp—we would hear a sigh, a mocking laugh, or a strain of sweet and sad music close beside us, but we took no notice. With might and main I labored on, till the sweat stood in great drops upon my forehead.

"Suddenly my spade struck upon something hard, and we both bent eagerly down to look. A square box, imbedded in the earth, was beneath us. It took some time to loosen it, but when we once had firm hold, it came up easily and lightly. We placed the lamp upon it, and leaving the spade behind us, went towards the stairs. A cold wind rushed through the place, as we reached their foot, and extinguished the lamp. At the same time, I was conscious of some invisible thing pressing against the box, and trying to force us, and it, back again.

"'Don't yield, now,' I cried, to Moorhouse, who was breathing hard and heavily. 'We *must* go on now.'

"'You're right, my lad—go on,' he answered, sturdily, and I am afraid I heard him swearing, in his perplexity.

"We pushed our way, by main strength, through the darkness to the head of the stairs. When the door flew open, and the broad light of day shone in upon us, that strange resistance ceased, of a sudden, and we bore our burden into the other room, without any further opposition.

"'Thank God!' said Moorhouse, sinking into my easy chair, and fanning himself. 'I never expected to get through with that alive! Lad—we have been fighting with the fiends this morning, I believe. Pour me out a glass of wine from yonder decanter, before we try to open this box.'

"I did as I was desired, and quaffed a generous bumper myself. Indeed, we both needed it, after our fright and peril.

"'Now, I am stronger,' was his next remark. 'Give me an axe.'

"I brought him one. He poised it in his hand, glanced once at the Italian's picture, and brought it down, with a heavy blow, that broke the lid of the box into fifty pieces.

"I caught one glimpse of the body of a man, but when the axe touched it it crumbled into dust and was as nothing. Only some mouldering bones, a tress or two of dark brown hair, and the blade of a dagger remained to tell of one who had been hurried by violence into an untimely grave.

"'Close the box again and we will bury him,' said Moorhouse, after he had looked at him a moment.

"The lid was split and hacked in all directions, but I found another, in a little shed beyond the barn, and we nailed it down securely over the last witness of Antoine Morelli's crime. Lifting the box we found a shady place just beside the door—we dug a grave and laid him there, and a wild rose-bush, growing near, we transplanted and trained to cover his last home with grace and beauty."

Reader, I sat in the door with my feet upon the step, that was like the headstone to that lonely grave. The roses, whose beauty and fragrance were drawn from that dead man's dust, blushed on my breast and in my hair! With a sudden revulsion of feeling I tore them away and threw them far from me. I sprang up from my favorite resting-place and went and leaned against the old well-curb to finish the story. For so deep a hold had it taken upon my imagination, and so real and true did every incident seem, that I believe I should have read it to the end, even had Antoine Morelli arisen from his grave beneath the old stone cross, and the man he had murdered stood ready to meet and defy him, where the thornless roses budded and blossomed beside the cottage door.

"This sad duty done, we knew that we could no longer remain there. Moorhouse helped me bring out the few articles of furniture I had hired of him and put them outside the gate, till he could send for them. I took a last look at the familiar rooms where I had hoped to dwell for many days; I scanned the dark face of the murderer for the last time,; and then we came out and locked the cottage door behind us. I brought my horse around, and fastened him beside the gate.

Moorhouse went with me and stood by Morelli's grave.

"'It is to be hoped he will rest now,' he said, emphatically. 'But you, lad—whither will you wend? Why not come and stay awhile with us? My house is large enough to hold another. You had best come.'

"I shook my head.

"'No—I must be alone. I shall find a place yet, I believe, where man has done no violence.'

"'And we part here—forever?'

"'I suppose so.'

"'Your way lies over the mountains?'

"'Yes.'

"'If I were younger and stronger, I believe I should go with you. But as it is—I can only say—God bless thee, lad, and good-bye.'

"'Good-bye, sir.'

"We shook hands warmly, he patted my horse kindly as he passed him, and took his way down through the valley where he lived. I gazed upon him till he was out of sight, and then mounted my horse.

"I looked back at the cottage as I rode away, and I could have sworn that the face of Antoine Morelli was watching me from the window. It might have been a fancy—but it does not matter—since the cottage is empty now."

The paper fell from my trembling hands.

"But it does matter—it must matter!" I said to myself. "For I am here, and for days and weeks I have been walking over graves, without knowing it."

I looked toward the cottage. There were many things inside belonging to me. These could be brought away, by a servant, for, of course, after what I had read, I could never think of living there any longer. But my gipsey-hat, my scarf, my gloves, these were necessary articles, and in the inner room.

"I will not be a fool," I said to myself, and walked bravely in after them.

In spite of myself I took one last look at Morelli's face, as I snatched my hat and scarf from their nails, and my gloves from the table. It seemed to work and change; and as I gazed the outer door swung together with a heavy clang. A cold wind rustled through the room; voices and footsteps seemed all around me, and I fled, like a coward, with my heart beating fast, and my limbs growing weak beneath me.

I could scarcely open the outer door, with my trembling hands, nor did strength and courage return with the first long draught of fresh air. A stealthy footstep seemed stealing behind me. I could hear the creaking of the floor, and as I hurriedly locked the outer door, I fancied I saw the pale dark face, looking through the window, and a dead man's hand parting the branches of the thornless rose, that a dead man's eyes might look upon me.

The Stone Cross rose, dark and gloomy, in the advancing twilight, and the daisies upon the murderer's grave bowed their white heads to the ground as a night wind went sweeping by. I stood but a moment there, heart and sense were failing me alike, and I fled, like a deer, along the road that led to the town

"Dead Man's Cottage," as it is still called, is mouldering away piecemeal. Sometimes I pass it in my daily drives, but it is always empty. No one is fool-hardy enough to live there now!

FOR LOVERS.

Man may make laws for the guidance and restraint of the passions, but he cannot take away from the human heart the divine instinct which teaches him that his mission is not altogether an earthly one. His love for woman came from God, and it should be hallowed by holy thoughts, and what hour so proper for the reception of them as when the heart is light with hope and

"The gentle arts and witcheries of love,"

kindle within the mind an undying flame which sheds over the future the brilliant hues of rosy hope, and

"Though frost
Reign everlastingly, and ice and snow
Thaw not, but gather, there is that within
Which, where it comes, makes summer?"

The marriage hour, with a light, as if from Heaven, playing on the young bride's face,

"Is worth a thousand passed
In pomp or ease,—'tis present to the last.
Years glide away untold—'tis still the same,
As fresh, as fair, as on the day it came."

And should such a golden time be lightly regarded, or not one thought given to the Dispenser of all good? We hope not; for as marriage is of divine origin, and was instituted for nobler purposes than mere sensual gratification, it is, when entered into with feelings which create chaste, and yet warm emotions, capable of instilling into the mind the solemn truth that—

"He loveth best, who prayeth best,
All things both great and small;
For the dear God that loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

This is a practical age no doubt, and there are sneerers and scoffers abroad,—men who, like toads, "feed on the vapor of the dungeons" in which they have with strange infatuation buried themselves,—but there is also a principle inherent in human nature, which lifts mankind—ay, even the most degraded—above the sordidness of their condition, and shows them a bright world far beyond the confines of that in which they seek their daily bread. Let the bride and the bridegroom then, on their wedding-day, on the threshold of a new and a varied existence, seek to obtain a glimpse of this glorious life by a marriage, under the auspices of chastened thoughts, and the solemnity of a religious festival, which was designed to instruct the heart in its duty, and purify the foul longings that belong to the mere creature.

HORRIBLE SPECIMENS OF HUMANITY.

African travelers have spoken of a tribe of negroes who possess that ornamental appendage so much admired by Lord Monboddo—*a tail*; but their statements have never received credence. It appears, however, that a race of men with tails really does exist in the interior of Africa. In a recent sitting of the Academie des Sciences, M. de Couret related that in 1852 he found in the service of a friend at Mecca one of these wretches, the lowest, assuredly, of mankind. The creature had an exterior prolongation of the vertebral column to the extent of three or four inches. He stated that he belonged to the tribe of the Ghilanes, whose territory is situated far beyond the Senner, who are thirty or forty thousand in number, worship the sun, the moon, the stars, the serpent, and the sources of a great river, (supposed to be the Nile), to which last they immolate victims. They eat plants, roots, fruits, and raw flesh, and eat the bodies of their enemies, of all ages and both sexes, whom they may slay in battle! They, however, prefer the flesh of women and children, as more succulent. They rarely exceed five feet in height, are ill-proportioned, with long, thin bodies, long arms, longer and flatter hands and feet than the rest of human kind, have the lower jaw large and long, the forehead narrow and excessively retreating, the ears long and deformed, the eyes small, black, brilliant, the nose large and flat, the mouth large, the lips thick, the teeth strong and sharp, the hair wooly, but not abundant. The man examined by M. de Couret had been so long in slavery as to have forgotten his native language; but he stated that, notwithstanding he had done all in his power to subdue the savage appetite, he was twice a week seized with a rage for raw flesh, which his master satisfied by giving him an enormous lump of mutton, and that if it were not done, he felt that he could not refrain from slaying and eating a woman or child. M. de Couret says that the natural dispositions of this animal were good; that his fidelity to his master was striking; and that he was not without intelligence; but in the slave markets of the east, where the race is not unknown, they are considered detestable.

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THE FARMER.

What a sovereign man is the intelligent, industrious farmer. Within his own realm of earth, he wields a sceptre to which all must bend. The balance of the world's life and comfort he holds in his stalwart hand. Neither courts, nor camps, nor armies, nor fleets, can exist without his aid. He is the feeder—aye, and the garmenter, virtually—of the race. Cities spring from the traffic in the products of his industry. Commerce is born at his behest. Of the State he is the "first Estate." Lord of the land, no man has firmer hold of the essential title of nobility. And he need be no plodder because he is a farmer. The day is past when the soil-tiller was confounded with the clod turned by his plow. The soil is his servitor; he smites it, and lo! the harvest comes forth. The hoe and the sickle make him music braver than dulcimers, and sound the march of a triumph, grand as it is peaceful and blessed. But he is not forever in the furrow. For him are broadest fields of study—fairest fields of delight. For him are hours linked to beauties and wisdoms; for him, periods of communion and rapture, of which the birds, the flowers, the streams, the woods, the stars, and all wondrous things of the universe, may bear witness. A brave man art thou, wielder of the mallet and the plane; and thou, skillful worker of webs; and thou, deviser of all machines whereby the labor of man's hand is speeded or abridged. But ye are all second to the farmer. He is master of the needfulest of toils, and the most serviceable products. He can live without you, but you cannot exist for a day without him. Honor, then, to the farmer; may his sphere widen and his stature be exalted. And honor to all honest toil, for of such are the fruits that form the crowning glories of the world.

◆

FAILURES—THEIR SECRET CAUSE.

What is the secret of the frequency of failures among business men?

"Overreaching," you will probably say,—the secret of *it*, in turn, being a too great making of haste to get riches. No doubt the secret does often lie in miscalculation and mismanagement in the counting-room and the storehouse, including all the evils of borrowing and endorsing without judgment or discretion. But we think a full investigation—if it were allowable—would demonstrate that the difficulty often lies in quite a different quarter, viz: in the extravagantly provided home of the bankrupt, and the needless expenditures of his family.

It is always much more difficult for a business man to pay the debts contracted by his wife and daughters than those contracted by himself. The latter, being within the regular programme of trade, are provided for, while the former are not thought of, perhaps, till the bills are presented and payment is urged. In other words,—it is the *surprise* of these outside liabilities which renders them so embarrassing.

If provided for they would have been merest trifles and paid as such. Now, they become serious annoyances, interfering with the payment of notes, and ultimately proving so much poison to his credit and his comfort.

Why will not the wife and daughter of the merchant and the manufacturer consider these things, and so become *helps*, instead of hindrances, to even the operations of business life!

◆

PECULIAR CHARACTER OF EPOCHS.

Those who have attentively considered the history of mankind, know that every age has its peculiar character. At one time, no desire is felt but for military honors; every summer affords battles and sieges, and the world is filled with ravage, bloodshed and devastation. This sanguinary fury at length subsides, and nations are divided into factions, by controversies about points that will never be decided. Men then grow weary of debate and altercation, and apply themselves to the arts of profit; trading companies are formed, manufactures improved, and navigation extended; and nothing is any longer thought on but the increase and preservation of property, the artifices of getting money, and the pleasures of spending it.

THE HARP.

Of all the musical instruments that have touched the ear and the heart of mankind, since Mercury gave his shell to Apollo, the harp stands foremost. Exquisitely beautiful as is the spirit of its chords, when struck by the hand of a master, the glory of its renown lies in associations and memories, tender and sacred, connecting it with the earliest history of our race, and with the most romantic and poetic ages of the past. When the oppressors of Israel asked for a song from the dark-eyed daughters of their captives, as they sat weeping by the waters of Babylon, they pointed to their harps, "hung upon the willows," and their souls refused a song of joy. The national instrument might wail a psalm of sorrow to lighten the weariness of captivity, and to recall memories of home, but it had no jubilant strain to gladden the heart of a conqueror, while the "chosen people" sat in bondage and tears.

But there were exultant strains in the harp when David touched its strings, and danced before the ark; or when the feet of Miriam moved obedient to its harmonies. The harp, too, was exultant in the hands of the Northern Skald, as he celebrated the triumphs of his Jarl, or sounded the praise and majesty of his gods in the halls of Wodin, or on the mountain-tops consecrated to Thor. There the white-haired and white-robed bard sang to the music of the harp the history of heroes and races, the glory of religion, and the splendors of the immortal state. The wandering Romans, approaching the shores of Britain, thus beheld the priests and poets of a religion anterior to Christ, piling sacrificial fires, and invoking the aid of their deities against the invading Cæsar. In all Northern Europe, the harp sounded in banquet hall and camp, at the Druid altar, and at the head of the embattled host. The harper was historian, eulogist, priest, and seer.

Kings were harpists of old. The Psalmist-monarch uttered his rejoicing and sorrow to the music of the harp. The great Alfred, of Britain, found in his harp a ready key to the camp and tent of the conqueror of his country, and while he charmed the ear of the Dane as he quaffed his mead, he also espied the weakness of a foe, who, ere another dawn, felt the fair hand of the royal harper victoriously grasping the battle-axe and the sword. And the great conqueror, Brian Boroihme, a king by might and by right—not heavier were his death-dealing blows on the "Field of the Green Banner," Clontarf, than were his fingers light and wizard when he touched that harp which Ireland still treasures among her relics, and which Bochsa claimed to have touched to please the ear of a Saxon king. And who has not fancied hearing, in some reverie of the soul over the fall and sorrow of nations, the strains of that mightier harp, viewless, but living and immortal—

"The harp that hung in Tara's halls."

Rude or perfected, in all nations the harp has had a home and a welcome. The Hebrew, the Scandinavian, the Cimbrian, and the Celt, have held it hallowed. Saints, pilgrims and heroes have been solaced by it, and we are taught, that, ascending to higher glories, the angels of God strike celestial melodies from its strings. It is not strange, then, with such a history upon Earth, and such a prophecy and faith attached to its future, that the harp is become a chosen and universal, as it is a sacred instrument among men.

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THE IMAGINATION'S PROVINCE.

The province of this faculty of the mind, we fear, is not generally understood. If it was, the legitimacy of its play, in literature, would be universally admitted. The best definition of the action of the imagination that we know of, is that given by the learned and orthodox author of "Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers, and the Investigation of Truth," Dr. Abercrombie. According to his view, the imagination takes the component elements of *real* scenes, events or characters, and combines them anew by a process of the mind itself, to form *compounds* which have no existence in nature. And thus, it has been asserted, Nature's own combinations, in particular displays of her Power, may be improved upon, as when Milton's genius constructed his imaginary landscape of the Garden of Eden—of which the great Scotch philosopher, Dr. Stewart, has remarked: that it is more perfect, probably, in all its parts, than any thing of the kind ever realized in nature. And it is certainly very different from anything that the great poet's own country exhibited at the time he wrote his sublime epic. This conclusion has been confirmed by a no less distinguished observer than Mr. Walpole, who remarks that the "Garden of Eden is not only free from the defects of the old English gardens, but that it actually seems to have furnished the *model* of the modern gardens of England, wherein the Miltonic principles of horticulture have been carried into execution."

A parity of reasoning would show that the elements of human character, as displayed in everyday actual life are susceptible of new combinations which do no violence to the principles of truth. What else, indeed, are the Adam and Eve of Milton? Surely, they are nothing else.

Such are the uses to which the imagination of the honest and judicious prose-writer, as well as the true poet, should and does put his knowledge of the principles of human nature.

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LIFE'S "JUSTE MILIEU."

"Juste milieu" is a favorite phrase among a certain school of French politicians. They express by it what they consider the true "middle ground" between the old-fashioned monarchial and the new-fashioned republican principles of government. But the original meaning of it would give us, in English, what we call the "golden mean," which is a part worth striving for in all the departments of human life.

The tendeucy of the American people has been, of late years, too much like that of the French in their political action. Look at the history of our Commerce. Now we have had expansion, now contraction, in our credit system—this year, the liveliest activity in mercantile life, with a tendency to importations far beyond our means of payment, to be followed, next year, by stagnation, and perhaps "pressure." So it is in politics. At one time we are all excitement about some election. We seem to forget everything but politics. Every other interest suffers neglect for the time. Then again all is quiet, even to indifference, as to the state of the nation, or the "safety of the Union." Nor has even our literature escaped this tendency to extremes, as a not very remote crisis in "cheap publications," so disappointedly demonstrated to such publishers as vainly supposed that "cheapness" alone would satisfy the reading public.

Let us hope for a return to the "*juste milieu*"—the "golden mean"—in all the affairs of life—in our commercial operations, our politics and our literature. And, above all, the controllers of that mightiest engine of modern times—the press—should see to it that the rule of *utile cum dulce*—the substantial and morally useful with the entertaining—is carefully observed in their issues.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

TRIP TO THE CAATSKILLS.

NUMBER TWO.

In an article in a late weekly, I was shocked at a flippant and unfeeling allusion to "the yellow invalids one meets at watering-places." Surely, the sight of such, wandering forth with feeble step and faded eyes, taking their last look at this beautiful earth, side by side with the rosy cheek and bounding pulse of health, should excite in us only feelings of tenderest love and compassion. Some such I met; but I would not, if I could, that their pale faces should have been banished from our merry circle. It was no damper on my enjoyment to gaze at their drooping eyelids, and listlessly crossed hands. I would but have yielded them the cosiest corner on the sofa, or the most comfortable arm-chair, or the sunniest nook on the piazza, or tempted their failing appetite with the daintiest bit at the table. I would like to have taken their transparent hands in my healthy palm, and given them a kindly grasp, by which they would recognize me in that better land, which every day dawns clearer on my sight. It is well that we should have such in our midst; and surely none whose hearts are drawn by yearning, but invisible cords, to the dear ones who *once* made sunlight in our homes, can fail to recognize, and respond to, the tacit claims of the stranger-invalid upon our tenderest sympathies.

And while upon this subject, I would speak a word, which, it seems to me, needs to be spoken—upon a courteous recognition of the lonely, unobtrusive traveler, who, for the time, makes one of the same family under a hotel roof. It is easy for all to pay court to the distinguished, the handsome, or the agreeable; to seek an introduction to such, or manufacture a pretext for speaking. It is for the unattractive I would plead, and the aged—for those who have nothing to recommend them to notice, save that they are unnoticed. It seems to me that one need study no book of etiquette to find out, that a passing salutation to such, a kind inquiry after their health, an offer of a flower—when one has been rambling where their weary feet may not go—is the true politeness. One feels like spurning the civility received at the hands of those who see not in these disregarded ones the lineaments of the same Father. It gives me pleasure to say that I have witnessed some noble examples of courtesy to such, extended with a graceful ease, which would seem less to confer a favor than to receive one by their acceptance.

Sunday at the Caatskills! "There is no church here," said one. "No church?" What human hand could span an arch like yonder blue vault? What pillars could it frame beautiful as those shapely trees? What carpet weave equal to that dew-bespangled moss? What stained windows design to surpass those interlacing branches, with their shifting sun-rays? What choir more perfect than those untutored birds, singing for very joy that God is so good, and His earth so fair?

"Service in the public parlor at ten;" so the landlord informed us. Heaven grant, said I, that the preacher may utter no discord amid all this harmony of Nature. Heaven grant he may not try to whip us into Heaven through fear of hell. Heaven grant he may not paint to us a tyrant in place of our smiling Father. Heaven grant he may not frown upon the innocent pleasures of childhood and youth, or falsely teach them that God is pleased with a crouching step and a long-drawn face. So, with many misgivings, I took my seat among the worshipers—young and old, sick and well, grave and gay—with creeds as various as their places of birth, or the lineaments of their faces, and some, thank God—with no creeds at all. How shall the preacher say a fitting word to all these?

I am happy to say that, in my opinion, he did it; that not one word would I have had erased or changed; that I could conceive of no one present who could object to the sincere, fair, and loving exposition of gospel truth which, like another "Sermon on the Mount," will, I trust, long be remembered.

I have now an added reason for liking Philadelphia and its people, since having listened, on that lovely Sabbath morning, to Rev. Dr. Brainerd. Since having made, also, at the Caatskills, the acquaintance of other agreeable Philadelphians. One of the alloys of travel is the pain one experiences in saying Farewell, in this world of change, to those who brighten our pathway but for a brief day. Could we always live thus, our eyes say, as we give and take the parting grasp; and yet, after all, if our chief aim is enjoyment, how far are we above the animals? No, no, let us accept our lot. *His* crown was thorns, why should ours be of roses?

Fanny Fern.

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AT REST.

Mortal maiden, do not weep!
I have peace for all your pain—
I will kiss your eyes asleep
So they will not wake again.

Then her hands so white and thin
Crossed she meekly on her breast,
And through sleep's still gate went in
Where the weary are at rest.

Alice Cary.

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"MOTHER EARTH."

How important and beautiful our relations to the earth! And yet how seldom we pause to consider them—especially those of us who dwell in cities. In the open country there is everything to remind of these relations—the trees with their fruits and foliage—the flowers with their perfumes—the fields with their golden grain—the meadows with their new mown hay—the gardens with their luxuriant growths—and, more than all these, the fallow field, where the ploughshare has turned over the fresh furrow, exposing to view myriad tiny things, that have found their home beneath the sod! We say "more than all," because it is this that most forcibly marks the distinction between the walk in town and the walk in the country. Here our feet touch only artificial things—the flagstones, quarried at some distant spot, fashioned by the hand of Art, and fitted to their places by the same—or the bricks, of still more artificial form and fashioning. These impart none of that genial warmth, which the "virgin soil" imparts. If they give heat at all, it is dry, scorching and repulsive, causing us to step with a hurried and spasmodic motion!

Yes, it is in the country, where the farmer lives, and moves, and has his more independent, as well as more natural being, that man's truer relations to the earth are enjoyed. They cannot be realized upon and between the bricks and the stones of the city. There, while breathing the pure air of heaven, laden only with the perfumes of flowers, instead of the sickening stenches of the street, and the alley, the son of toil may put his feet on the naked bosom of his "*mother earth*," and gratefully absorb the magnetic strength which she waits to impart to her more naturally related children!

PROFANATION.

BY MARY FORREST.

This is emphatically an age of kissing. Everybody kisses *every*-body. Since the anti-fastidious days when the old woman saluted her cow, such a time of promiscuous and inordinate lip-service was never known. The sign and seal of a "strange intelligence" has become a hissing and by-word; the plaything of witlings; the tool of satyrs; the lost jewel of the elect.

Zenobia's kiss is the "long and silent" throb of her inmost soul—unexpressed and inexpressible, save to those divinely akin; but she chances to be one in the indiscriminate circle, and, as each member drops off, must bend her stately head to the puppet performance—the kiss all round—which would be most appropriately accompanied by the elegant air of

"Pop! goes the weasel."

Penelope, herself, is obliged to look sharply to the dew on her lips, or ten to one it will be spirited away on some graceless *moustache*. The malady grows; and is becoming epidemic and chronic.

That last evening at the W——'s, the last stout woman in the file of leave-takers had well nigh finished me. Zeus and Juno! what an expressionless, cavernous mouth yawned over mine! Nectar and ambrosia! what a moist explosion! For the next six weeks I will not kiss a friend. In the meantime the dews of heaven—the "milk-fed lips" of babies, and my heart's best prayers will perhaps bring back the ravished privilege.

A kiss should be one of the holiest demonstrations of the soul; it should have a voiceless eloquence—an electric tranquility—an eclectic reserve. It has no such thing. It pops a good morning—it sputters a good evening;—it whizzes and fizzles on the right hand—on the left hand—here, there, and everywhere; we are kept constantly on the defensive; at last marked, cornered and set upon, we plant our teeth hard, and abide the shock as best we can. It is high-handed sacrilege, and I *will* enter my protest.

A kiss is no more an unconsidered trifle to be rudely filched—torn warm and beating from its nestling place, and frittered from mouth to mouth, than is the purest prayer I offer—which God keep still inviolate! If we would preserve this gift a sweet and holy token—beautified and sanctified to the beloved—we must use it wisely, with a noble chariness.

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GOOD ADVICE FOR EVEYBODY.

If wisdom's ways you wisely seek
Five things observe with care:—
Of whom you speak—to whom you speak—
And how—and when—and where.

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NECESSITY OF ATTENTION TO LITTLE THINGS.

It has been remarked, that the world punishes with too great severity the error of those who imagine that the ignorance of little things may be compensated by the knowledge of great; for so it is, that as more can detect petty failings than can distinguish or esteem great qualifications, and as mankind is in general more easily disposed to censure than to admiration, contempt is often incurred by slight mistakes, which real virtue or usefulness cannot counterbalance.

Yet such mistakes and inadvertencies, it is not easy for a man deeply immersed in study to avoid; no man can become qualified for the common intercourses of life by private meditation: the matters of the world are not a regular system, planned by philosophers upon settled principles, in which every cause has a congruous effect, and one part has a just reference to another. Of the fashions prevalent in every country, a few have arisen perhaps, from particular temperatures of the climate; a few more from the constitution of the government; but the greater part have grown up by chance, been started by caprice, been contrived by affectation, or borrowed without any just motives of choice from other countries.

Of all these, the savage that hunts his prey upon the mountains, and the sage that speculates in his closet, must necessarily live in equal ignorance; yet by the observation of these trifles it is, that the ranks of mankind are kept in order, that the address of one to another is regulated, and the general business of the world carried on with facility and method.

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THE BLUSTERING HUMBUG.

There are not many things more nauseous to a healthy and honest mind, than a human humbug, a canting, selfish, sneaking, loud-mouthed humbug. Of such there are, unhappily, many ripe specimens, some of whom play the oily game of hypocrisy, and others the bullying one of bluster. Of the two, the latter is the most disgusting species. Your blustering humbug is a Jupiter Tonans when mounted on a beer-barrel before a loafing crowd, and he is equally mighty on foolscap. He can hurl syllogisms at his opponents as a battery hurls chain-shot, and throw epithets as a catapult did stones. He is famous for "bearding tyrants on their thrones," and loves to round a mellow period with coruscating allusions to the "immortal Washton—left an orphan at the tender age of twenty-one years, on Plymouth Rock in Virginia," and so forth. Your blustering humbug can pour forth a cataract of glittering nonsense at any moment, every separate drop of which shall be a falsehood or a blunder. He is usually from the other side of the Atlantic, and comes to America for the purpose of advocating principles and practices which he denounced at home. He is no "stereotyped conservative," no "fossil representative"—not he! Let him but discover that public sentiment and plunder have changed to the other side, and he will speedily follow, flourishing the "sword of Liberty," and "hurling defiance at crowned wrong and sceptred tyranny," &c., &c. He is an utter nuisance to whatever party he infests, and the only way they can get rid of him is to get into a minority.

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THE CHILDREN OF THE POOR.

"We are surprised that so few children of low origin work their way to respectability and eminence."—*Eastern Banner*.

The editor of the Eastern Banner must have been all his life in a chronic state of Rip Vanwinkleism, or he would long since have discovered that a surprisingly large proportion of "children of low origin"—by which he means the children of poor and undistinguished parentage—do rise to respectability, wealth and eminence. At this very time, nine-tenths of the most eminent, prosperous and respected men in the Union are the graduates of this very class. The wonder is that so many children of poor parentage force their way to distinction and wealth. Considering the deprivations and hardships they have to encounter, it is truly wonderful that any of them surmount the formidable barriers opposed to their progress, in early life. And they are all the more worthy of honor, because of the obscurity of their origin, and the difficulties which beset their path at the period when difficulties weigh the heaviest and appear the most formidable.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Liars are verbal forgers—stiflers of truth—murderers of fact. They often attempt to conceal their failing by affecting a scrupulous adherence to veracity. A chap, who rarely "shamed the devil," except by outlying him, once said of his friend, "Jack is a good fellow, but it must be confessed he has his failings. I am sorry to say this, but I will not tell a lie for any man. I love my friend, but I love truth still more." "Well, I never expected," said a bystander, "that you would prefer a perfect stranger to an old acquaintance."

It was a beautiful compliment that Haydn, the musician, paid to a great female vocalist. Reynolds had painted her as Cecilia, listening to celestial music. Looking at it, Haydn said, "It is like her, but there is a strange mistake." "What is that?" asked Reynolds. "Why, you have painted her listening to the angels, when you ought to have represented the angels listening to her."

A mere scholar is generally known by his ignorance of everything but languages, which have so filled his head as to leave room for nothing else. He mistakes the steps for the Temple of Minerva; the shrine for the Goddess; and is as proud of his mind's purse as if there were gold in it. Pedantry's jargon will no more improve our understandings than the clink of a smoke-jack will fill our stomachs.

A very cadaverous looking poet recited a poem, descriptive of a country walk, in which occurred these lines:

"The redbreast, with his furtive glance,
Comes and looks at me askance."

One of the listeners exclaimed—"Gad! if it had been a carrion crow, he would have looked you full in the face."

In Indiana, a few days ago, a loafer grossly insulted, by vulgar words, three ladies whom he encountered in a field. Their brothers, who happened to be near, put him into a deep brook and held him there till he was half drowned. They wouldn't brook the insult, preferring to brook the insulter.

After a scholar has attained a certain age and certain discipline, no knowledge that you can let in upon his mind will do him harm. Cattle may be let into an orchard to graze when the trees are grown up, though not when they are young.

Punch says, if you wish to see the teeth of a beautiful young lady, praise her rival before her face. We think the object may often be effected as well by a pretty compliment to herself. And then her teeth appear to the best advantage when we are not afraid of them.

Mr. E. H. Day, of Garrard county, Ky., has advertized for his lost dog. Let the dog, by all means, be restored to him. If every dog has his day, every Day should have his dog.

Chateaubriand, speaking of a Roman sunset, said it seemed as if all the purple of Rome's consuls and Cæsar's were spread out under the last footsteps of the God of Day.

A Western rhymer says that he writes only when an angel troubles the fountain of his soul. We don't know that the fact of his soul's being troubled gives him the right to trouble the souls of other people.

It is a common impression that most ladies prefer tall lovers to short ones. So we suppose that we shall not be charged with a want of gallantry in saying that a lady generally likes to *draw a long beau*.

A well-known editor makes his boast that there is no other like him in the country. If there were many, the devil would be to pay, but then there would be an abundance to pay him with.

A female lecturer who has gone through the country, abusing every body, and almost every thing, talks of betaking herself to pantaloons. It is quite enough for one person to have disgraced the costume of one sex.

We have received a copy of a pretended literary paper from Illinois, entitled "The Sublime." We have not read it, but we think, from its title, that there is just one step between it and its editor.

"What will be the best method of saving this small beer from depredation?" said a gentleman to his butler. "By placing a cask of strong beer by the side of it."

It is dangerous to be ignorant where the masses, as in our country, are enlightened. In a general illumination, the unlighted windows are often pelted and broken.

There's no great cause for any one to be afraid of the fellows who parade our streets, armed with dirks. They are generally chaps who *stick at nothing*.

"Do try to talk a little common sense," said a young lady to her visitor. "Ah, but wouldn't that be taking an unfair advantage of *you*?"

It has been very generally thought that no other fort ever suffered so much from a single battle as the piano forte from the Battle of Prague.

Some people are never witty except from the inspiration of wine. Their wit is like the flying-fish, which shows itself only while its wings are wet.

It may be said of ladies as well as of vessels, that if they are well manned, they are very certain to be well rigged.

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CURRENT ITEMS.

As a woman named Muttlebury was sitting in the door of her log house, one evening a short time since, some fifteen miles from St. Paul, Minnesota, she thought she heard a noise in a tree that stood a short distance from the cabin, and on looking up beheld a panther glaring at her. She at once darted back, and dashed to the door, just as the panther alighted on the threshold. The animal succeeded in getting his head in at the door before it closed—an unfortunate thing for him, as Mrs. Muttlebury was a stout woman and saw her advantage. Pressing against the door with all her force, she held her foe fast, and yelled for aid. Assistance soon came in the person of Mr. Muttlebury, who seized an axe and soon despatched the panther.

A correspondent of the Manchester (Eng.) Guardian gives an account of the ascent of Mont Blanc by a large party, among whom were several Americans, one of whom, a young lady named Trelawney, slipped over an icy precipice, and fell hundreds of feet into a fissure, where she must have been dashed in pieces. Living or dead, no assistance could be rendered her, and there her remains must lie until the last Trump shall sound.

A few days since, as a boy named Burt, sixteen years old, was out hunting in Atlanta county, Mississippi, he came suddenly upon a negro in the forest, who rushed upon him with an axe and tried to cut him down. The little fellow was not to be easily overcome, however; he fought desperately, and after a short struggle stretched his assailant lifeless upon the ground, with a charge of buckshot through his heart.

There is soon to be a National Chess Congress in New York, at which all the best players in America will exhibit their skill. Some of the "green ones" have been hoaxed by accounts of a player from Iowa who plays four games at a time blindfolded. This gentleman must be a brother of the blind man who *saw* the "unprovoked assault upon William Patterson."

A German named Heinrich attempted to drink a hundred glasses of lager bier within eight hours, on a bet, a few evenings since, at a saloon in this city. After drinking seventy glasses he became insensible, and for several hours his life was despaired of. But after a physician had thoroughly pumped him out, and administered some stimulants, he revived.

The last news from India brings accounts of shocking massacres of Europeans, including women and children, by the enraged Sepoys. On the other hand, the British are taking a terrible revenge, and blow the Sepoys they capture into atoms from the mouth of cannon.

A large party of Camanche Indians recently attacked a company of emigrants in Western Texas, and killed one and wounded three others dangerously; but the white men's rifles were so deadly, that the savages had to retreat, at last.

In the northern part of Georgia, a rattlesnake was recently killed by a party of hunters, which measured nearly twenty-two feet five inches in length, and had twenty-eight rattles. A dog that belonged to the party was bitten by the monster, and soon died in great agony.

A German woman named Bauermann, living in Clinton county, Illinois, was recently arrested for whipping a little daughter, five years old, with a large cowhide, until the child fell down in a fit, and died.

Michael Godwin, a sailor, walked into a low rum-shop in Water street a few evenings since—called for a glass of gin—put a quantity of arsenic in it—coolly drank off the potation, and died in a few hours.

A child named Susan Norcross, living in Broome street, was choked to death a few days since by a peach-stone which lodged in her throat.

Within four weeks, seven confidential clerks in this city have been detected in the embezzlement of their employers' funds.

THE DAPPLE MARE:

An ancient Legend, Versified and Diversified.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

I.

"Once on a time," as ancient tales declare,
There lived a farmer in a quiet dell
In Massachusetts; but exactly *where*,
Or *when*, is really more than I can tell,—
Except that, quite above the public bounty,
He lived within his means and Bristol County.

II.

By patient labor and unceasing care
He earned, and so enjoyed, his daily bread;
Contented always with his frugal fare,
Ambition to be rich ne'er vexed his head,
And thus unknown to envy, want, or wealth,
He flourished long in comfort, peace and health.

III.

The gentle partner of his humble lot,
The joy and jewel of his wedded life,
Discharged the duties of his peaceful cot,
Like a true woman and a faithful wife;
Her mind improved by thought and useful reading,
Good manners and nine children showed her breeding

IV.

Grown old at last, the farmer called his son,
The youngest, (and the favorite, I suppose)
And said:—"I long have thought, my darling John,
'Tis time to bring my labors to a close;
So now to toil I mean to bid adieu,
And deed, my son, the homestead farm to you."

V

The boy embraced the boon with vast delight,
And promised while their precious lives remained,
He'd till and tend the farm from morn till night,
And see his parents handsomely maintained;
God help him, *he* would never fail to love, nor
Do aught to grieve his generous old gov'nor!

VI.

The farmer said:—"Well—let us now proceed,
(You know there's always danger in delay)
And get 'Squire Robinson to write the deed;
Come—where's my staff?—we'll soon be on the way.
But John replied, with tender, filial care,
"You're old and weak—I'll catch the Dapple Mare."

VII.

The mare was saddled, and the man got on;
The boy on foot trudged cheerfully along,
The while, to cheer his sire, the duteous son
Beguiled the weary way with talk and song.
Arrived at length, they found the 'Squire at home,
And quickly told him wherefore they had come.

VIII.

The deed was writ in proper form of law,
With many a "'foresaid," "therefore," and "the same,"
And made throughout without mistake or flaw
To show that John had now a legal claim
To all his father's land—conveyed, given, sold,
Quit-claimed, *et cætera*,—to have and hold.

IX.

Their business done, they left the lawyer's door,
Happier, perhaps, than when they entered there;
And started off as they had done before,—
The son on foot, the father on the mare.
But ere the twain a single mile had gone,
A brilliant thought occurred to Master John.

X.

Alas for truth!—alas for filial duty!—
Alas that Satan in the shape of Pride,
(His most bewitching form save that of Beauty,)
Whispered the lad:—"My boy, *you* ought to ride!"
"Get off!" exclaimed the younker—"'tisn't fair
That you should always ride the Dapple Mare!'

XI.

The son was lusty, and the sire was old,
And so, with many an oath and many a frown,
The hapless farmer did as he was told;
The man got off the steed; the boy got on,
And rode away as fast as she could trot,
And left his sire to trudge it home on foot!

XII.

That night, while seated round the kitchen fire
The household sat; cheerful as if no word,
Or *deed*, provoked the injured father's ire,
Or aught to make him sad had e'er occurred,—
Thus spoke he to his son:—"We quite forgot,
I think, t' include that little turnip-lot!"

XIII.

"I'm very sure, my son, it wouldn't hurt it,"
Calmly observed the meditative sire,
"To take the deed, my lad, and just insert it."
Here the old chap inserts it—in the fire!
Then cries aloud with most triumphant air,
"*Who now, my son, shall ride the Dapple Mare?*"

THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

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CHAPTER XLVI.

PLOTS AND COUNTERPLOTS.

"There are swift hours in life—strong rushing hours—
That do the work of tempests in their might!
They shake down things that stood as rocks and towers
Unto th' undoubting mind; they pour in light
Where it but startles, like a burst of day;
For which the uprooting of an oak makes way;
They touch with fire thought's graven page—the roll
Stamped with past years—and lo! it shrivels as a scroll!"
HEMANS.

In the meanwhile, Willful Brande walked up and down the front piazza, musing upon the strange situation of the beautiful and friendless maiden. The more he reflected upon the character and position of her guardian, the more strongly he became convinced of the imminent necessity of her being immediately delivered from his power. That Julius Luxmore would not scruple to make use of any means for the accomplishment of his purposes, he felt assured. The question with which his mind labored was, how to effect her escape. While intensely studying this problem, his eye fell upon old Timon sauntering alone through the grove. In the time that he had spent on the Island, he had especially noticed the great devotion of this aged servant to his fair young mistress. He walked rapidly down the steps, across the lawn, and into the grove, where the old man lingered.

Timon took off his hat with his usual humble "Sarvint, marster."

"Timon—come farther into the shade. I want to speak to you of your young mistress. Tell me, now, whom do you love best—Miss L'Orient, or Mr. Luxmore?"

Timon looked up with a sly, intelligent smile, and said—

"Young marster, I sees how things be gwine on! I done took notice ob Mr. Julius a-comin' up from de boat; an', likewise, ob Miss Etwill. I sees good how she ain't got a minit for him now; and as for me, young marster, I is willin to do anythin' in dis worl' to 'mote de happiness ob Miss Etwill."

Willful blushed, lest his own motives should be misconstrued, even by this most humble of judges, and he hastened to say—

"The change in your young lady's opinion of her guardian is not without the best reasons. And all that is necessary to promote her happiness is to get her out of his power, and under the protection of her old friend, Dr. Crampton and his sisters, from whose house she can appeal to the Orphan's Court."

While making this confidence, Willful Brande had narrowly watched the countenance of the old man, whose honest gaze did not once flinch, and who now replied:

"You may trus' me to de def wid anythin' as is for Miss Etwill's good."

"I do believe you. But is there any among the women for whose fidelity in such a matter you could answer? because, in her escape, Miss L'Orient should have a female attendant."

"Marser, I can be sponsious for my ole 'oman, Moll—dat is all. Not but what all de oders is hones' 'nough, an' love Miss Etwill 'nough; but den, marster, dey's 'feared o' Marse Julius. So, I wouldn' like to trust 'em."

"Can you procure a boat—let us see—between midnight and day?"

"Who, me? Better 'lieve so, young marster! I has de s'preme 'trol ob de boats."

"Then select a good, sound, safe boat, such as may be managed by me and you. And, let me see—the most unfrequented part of the Island is the bathing pool of your young lady, Crystal Creek?"

"True for you, marster; no one ever sets foot there, 'cept 'tis Miss Etwill and her maid."

"And the quietest time in the twenty-four hours is about two o'clock in the morning. Now, Timon, can you have the boat in readiness on Crystal Creek about that hour?"

"Sartain, marster!"

"How will you be able to know the time?"

"Marster, I gwine lay awake till midnight. I allers knows when it is midnight, by de crowin' o' de roosters; an' sure*lie* I can guess at an hour or two beyant; anyways, ef I should be a minit *before* two o'clock, be sure I won't be half a second *arter*."

"Very well. Be vigilant and faithful, and you shall be richly rewarded, old man," replied Willful. And after a little more immaterial conversation, concerning the details of the plan, these justifiable conspirators separated—the old man to cautiously commence the preliminary arrangements of the flight, and the youth to seek the house, and, if possible, find means to communicate the plan to Etoile. As he turned to leave the spot, the sound of a quick, retreating step fell on his ear. He started, listened, and looked about; but neither hearing nor seeing any one, he concluded that the fugitive steps were those of a calf that he perceived gamboling at a short distance; and so, with returning confidence, he hurried onward.

WILLFUL BRANDE AND OLD TIMON PLANNING THE ESCAPE OF ETOILE.

He had scarcely left the grove, when the figure of a man emerged from the cover of a thicket, and with a gesture of hate and anticipated triumph, took a nearer path to the house, which, unperceived, he reached before the arrival thither of the midshipman.

When Willful Brande entered, he was met by a servant, who invited him to walk into the dining-room, where he found the supper table spread, and the clergyman and the lawyer, together with Mr. Luxmore, apparently waiting his arrival.

"Gentlemen, I bear to you the excuses of your fair young hostess, whom a sudden but temporary indisposition confines to her chamber. Pray be seated, and 'good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both,'" said Mr. Luxmore, as he assumed the head of the table. The board was well spread with all the substantial delicacies of the season. A footman served tea and coffee from the sideboard.

"So, Etoile is a prisoner, then," thought Willful, who was not for an instant deceived by the pretext advanced by Mr. Luxmore—"but it shall go hard but that I find means to liberate her before morning."

The indisposition of the young lady was no doubt afterwards offered in explanation of the delay of the wedding.

When all left the dining-room, Willful Brande went to his chamber, wrote a few lines on a small piece of paper, rolled it into a minute parcel, returned to the lower hall, and walked to and fro the passage and the piazza, until he found an opportunity of slipping the little scroll into the hands of Moll with the swiftly whispered words:—

"Give this into the hands of your young lady as soon as possible."

With a nod of intelligence Moll concealed the scrip.

Meantime Etoile, locked within her two rooms, "possessed" her young "soul in patience." Under Divine Providence her hopes rested upon Willful Brande. Though no confidential word had, since the interruption of her flight, passed between herself and the youth, she felt assured that he would not desert her cause; that he would, upon the first opportunity, leave the Island and report the case to her old friend Doctor Crampton, with the request that he would appeal in her behalf to the Orphan's Court. Meanwhile she knew the danger to which she was constantly exposed from the unscrupulous character of her guardian. She even wondered whether he would now permit her own servants to attend her.

Night drew on, she heard from the distance "the tinkling of silver upon porcelain"—sounds of preparation for the evening meal. After a few minutes she went to a side window and looked out, and saw her guardian hurrying, with disordered steps, towards the house. With a growing aversion to his presence she recoiled and left her point of view. Soon after she heard the steps of Willful Brande enter the front door, and then all proceed to the dining-room. She closed her windows to keep out the dampness of the evening that was falling humid and heavy. Lights had not been brought her, and she sat down in darkness to meditate upon her strange position.

After a while she heard the guests leave the dining-room and proceed to the parlor, and Julius Luxmore's voice in conversation with the two gentlemen. Next she heard the solitary step of Willful Brande pacing to and fro in the passage, and up and down the piazza; but at last he too, seemed to have left the scene, and all was silent. Half an hour passed, and then the key was turned in the lock, and her guardian, accompanied by old Moll bearing a tray of refreshments and a light, entered.

Etoile, on seeing him, turned her back and walked off to the other end of the room. Old Moll, while busily engaged in arranging refreshments upon a little stand, cautiously endeavored to catch the eye of her young mistress, and at last succeeded in exchanging with her a significant glance.

Mr. Luxmore walked up and down the floor, watching her keenly, but not attempting to address her.

Etoile bore this with patient dignity for a little while, and then said:—

"Since you use your power to confine me here, sir, you should at least show ordinary delicacy in refraining from intruding upon my privacy at this unseemly hour of the night."

"I exercise the double privilege of your guardian and your betrothed husband, young lady. And, Etoile, I wished again to converse with you to-night," he answered, then turning to the old servant, he added—"Moll, leave the room."

The old woman bowed obedience, and then making feints to settle the spoon and fork for her young mistress, as soon as Mr. Luxmore's back was turned upon them in his walk, she hastily slipped Willful Brande's rolled note into her hand, and then withdrew from the room.

Mr. Luxmore now returned on his walk, drew a chair to the side of Etoile, and then with all the eloquence he could command, re-commenced his suit. The young girl listened with a curling lip, answered only when direct questions were put to her, and then in a manner that must have utterly repulsed any other than the desperate adventure before her; and him it nearly maddened.

"Mr. Luxmore, it is ten o'clock—an hour past my usual one of retiring. You must see the necessity of now leaving me," at last she said, in a tone that compelled even the unscrupulous man before her to respect her words.

"Very well! I have given you this last opportunity. You are obdurate! and my course is taken!"

When he had left the room, Etoile unrolled her scrip and read—

"Miss L'Orient, I advise you to retire early and try to sleep as much as possible between this and the hour of two in the morning. At that hour, one who watches will awaken you, and a boat will wait at the Crystal Creek to convey you to your friends on the mainland. W. B."

On reading this note, with its prospect of immediate escape, the heart of Etoile leaped with gladness.

Meanwhile Willful Brande, loathing the sight of Julius Luxmore and his possibly mercenary guests, withdrew to his own chamber, shut the door and seated himself by the window, to pass the time as he might in meditation, or in gazing out upon the dark, starlit expanse of waters.

Sometime after ten o'clock, he heard the guests conducted by Mr. Luxmore come up and enter their sleeping-rooms, which were upon the same floor with his own. He heard their *soi disant* host, with much courtly politeness, take leave of them and go down stairs. Next he heard the muffled motions of the guests in their final preparations for bed. Then all was silent until the clock struck eleven.

"Twelve—one—two! Three hours yet! how *shall* I live them through, here in darkness and solitude!" exclaimed Willful to himself.

He slipped off his shoes and paced softly up and down the room for an indefinite time. Then growing impatient of that resource, he laid himself down upon his bed. But finding such absolute physical repose only the more aggravating to his mental restlessness, he started up again and resumed his pacing.

How insupportably weary the time.

Twelve o'clock struck! Two hours yet! When *would* they come to an end? Surely the common reckoning of time must be all false! He had passed years that seemed shorter than these eternities of hours. He threw himself down once more upon his bed and compelled himself to lie still for awhile.

He had been lying thus for a few minutes when, in the profound silence, he thought he heard the sound of a key turned in a lock, and a footstep retreating towards the hall stair-case. He listened. All was silent.

"It was one of our guests perhaps," he said to himself, and he resolved to remain perfectly quiet, lest his motions might also attract attention. But his anxiety increased. The clock struck one.

"But one hour more! Yet, oh! these hours! they seem eternities!" he said, as he softly left his couch and went and sat by the window.

He looked out, but all was so dark that even to his accustomed eyes, trees and houses, land and water, earth and sky, presented scarcely perceptible differences in shades of blackness.

Again he threw himself upon his couch; again grew impatient of rest, and started up to pace the room; and yet again seated himself at the window.

Finally, his guardian angel inspired him with the idea of profitably employing a portion of the weary time in praying for the success of his undertaking. He sunk upon his knees and prayed that he might be delivered from all selfish purposes and serve the friendless orphan with an eye single to her interest, and that the "Father of the fatherless" might crown his efforts in her behalf with success. As he arose from his knees the clock struck two!

He took his hat, stole softly to the door and pushed.

The door was fast locked! He was a prisoner.

For a moment the discovery of this fact, with all the consequences to be deducted from it, almost paralyzed his energies! But the next instant he had recovered his presence of mind and activity of resources. He suddenly recollected a chisel that had lain for days upon his mantle-shelf. It was but the work of a few minutes to take that instrument and with it force back the catch of the lock and free himself.

He then hurried softly through the dark and silent hall and down the stairs.

All below was mute and black as death and Erebus.

Cautiously unfastening the hall door, he paced slowly around the house until he found himself below the window of Etoile's boudoir. Against the wall leaned a ladder.

"So far—well! Timon has been punctual in placing this means of escape at hand," he thought. And ascending a few of the rungs he called, in a soft tone:—

"Miss L'Orient! Miss L'Orient!"—and listened. But no voice replied.

He went up farther and called out louder; but without success.

Growing very anxious he ascended to the top of the ladder, put his head in at the window, and called eagerly—"Miss L'Orient!—Miss L'Orient!" But all was dark, and cold, and still.

"This is no time for false delicacy. She must forgive me, since I mean well," said Willful, very much alarmed, as he turned himself in at the window, and groped his way through the boudoir, and through the adjoining chamber, still calling on the name of Etoile. But neither sound nor motion answered him; all was dark and silent as death and the grave.

Etoile was gone!

Half frantic with terror, upon her account, Willful Brande hurried through the window and down the ladder, and ran with phrenzied haste straight on to the cabin of Timon, at the door of which he knocked, imperatively exclaiming:—

"Timon! Timon! are you there? What is the meaning of this?"

"Lor, gor, a-mity, Marse Willful, honey, come in, yerself! I can't move! I done tied hand and foot!" answered the voice of the old man.

Willful pushed the door open and entered the cabin, which was as dark as any other place in that dark night.

"Feel on to de shelf dere for the match and de candle, honey, and light it, and I done tell you all about it," said Timon's voice, from the obscurity.

Willful found a match, and struck a light, that revealed to him the form of poor old Timon, bound hand and foot with strong cords, and thrown upon the floor of his cabin. Without an instant's delay he seized a sharp knife, cut the cords, and helped the old man to his feet.

"Now, then, what is the meaning of all this?" inquired Willful.

"Couldn't tell you, to save my life, Marster, only I reckon how Marse Julius done found we-dem out, and outwitted us! 'Cause 'bout an hour ago, he done come here and throw me down, and tie me, and leave me here without sayin' of a word."

A terrible idea occurred to Willful.

"Come! follow me quickly! to the boat!" he said, and rushed forth into the night.

The old man hurried after as fast as age and infirmity would permit.

They reached Crystal Creek just in time, dimly to discern that a boat had left the shore, and was now some quarter of a mile out upon the bay.

"He has carried her off! He would not have done it by force, since that must have created a disturbance which would have reached my ears! He has carried her off by fraud. He will take her on board his chartered ship! Quick! prepare a boat, and let us row for life! I will follow her thither! I will board that ship! I will rescue her or die!" exclaimed Willful, vehemently.

"It will be *die*, then, Marster; but nobody sha'n't call old Timon a coward in his old days," said the poor creature, who, with the air of a martyr, went to prepare the boat.

But Willful would not let the old man risk his safety by accompanying him. Alone he entered the light skiff, and using both oars, propelled it swiftly over the water. He could no longer see the other boat, but he rowed directly for the distant ship, seen by the light at her prow, and which he naturally supposed to be the chartered vessel of Julius Luxmore.

His light skiff flew like a sea-bird over the surface of the bay, and quickly touched the side of the vessel.

Without a moment's hesitation he scaled the ladder, and stood upon the deck, face to face with his sister, Barbara Brande, whose barque had anchored there an hour before!

"Willful!"

"Barbara!"

They gazed upon each other in amazement for a moment, and then rushed together in a hearty embrace.

And while hurried explanations occupy them, we must return to see what has become of Etoile.

We said that, on reading Willful Brande's note, with its promise of speedy release, her heart had leaped with gladness. But to follow its advice so far as to go to sleep, that was impossible! There was no repose to her excited nerves that night. However, the maiden was young and very strong, and the loss of a single night's rest would scarcely be felt by her fine organization. So she blew out her light, drew the bolts across her door, closed the blinds, and sat down by the window to watch and wait from ten till two o'clock. At eleven every one about the house had apparently retired. At twelve it was to be supposed that all were buried in sleep. And yet two hours remained of the very "witching time" of night—hours when all nature seemed wrapped in death-like repose. Then she, every nerve acute with listening, heard her name softly breathed beneath her window. She silently opened the shutter and murmured lowly—"Do not speak again. I am here." And taking her head in, she quickly put on her bonnet and mantle and re-appeared at the window, against which a short ladder had been leaned.

A figure muffled in a large cloak, though this was July, waited at the foot. Lightly Etoile descended the rounds, where she was received by the man, who bowed, and making a signal of silence, walked before. Etoile, with a rapidly beating heart, followed. Both took the direction of the Crystal Creek. The path was narrow, only one little pair of feet having been accustomed to tread it. It led through the densest portion of that thicket of woods that girdled the Island.

The guide went on in silence. Etoile followed—the palpitation of her heart, the agitation of her whole frame, preventing her from wishing to speak.

It was still very dark, so that even when they emerged from the thicket, the line of beach and the expanse of water seemed only fainter shadows. The skiff moored in the little creek looked only a blacker mark upon the dark water. The boat was alone.

"Where are my servants? Are not Moll and Timon to go with me?" inquired Etoile, for the first time speaking, in a hushed voice.

But her guide lifted up his finger to enjoin perfect silence, and took her hand to assist her into the boat. A strange misgiving upon account of the absence of her attendants seized the heart of Etoile. But as no suspicion of treachery mingled with her feelings, and as her confidence in Willful Brande remained unshaken, she firmly stepped into the boat and took her seat in the stern. Her companion followed, sat down midway, and taking up the two oars began to ply them. The boat glided swiftly over the still dark surface of the creek out into the open Bay. The rower silently directed its course towards the coast of Northumberland, that lay due west. The guide continued mute, as though he had been born dumb, and Etoile, now that she was alone upon the waters with this reserved companion, from a feeling of bashfulness remained quiet. Her misgivings increased. There seemed to be no necessity now that they were so far from land for this continued silence. It grew oppressing, alarming; she became nervous, she could bear the trial no longer, but spoke out, in a low agitated tone—the very sound of her own voice amid the stillness frightening her the more—inquiring—

"Mr. Brande, excuse me, please, but where are my servants? Why would they not come?"

A low derisive laugh answered her!

"My, God! I am betrayed!" cried Etoile, with a stifled shriek.

"You are *entrapped*, fair plotter!" answered the voice of Julius Luxmore.

"Oh, misery, misery, oh, God help me in my bitter extremity!" she cried, in a voice of thrilling agony, burying her face in her hands and dropping her head upon her bosom.

Then followed a short pause, during which no sound was heard but the dipping of the oars; Etoile remained half stunned with sudden despair; Luxmore, scorned, repulsed, and enraged, as he had been by her, now, with the vengeful malignity of a fiend, gloated over the sight of her sufferings. But already the heroic young spirit was struggling to rally from the shock and throw off the benumbing weight of despair.

"What is the meaning of this, wretch?" at length she asked, in rising indignation, as she lifted her fair head.

"I will tell you, my beauty!" replied Luxmore, in a tone of malignant triumph. "The meaning of this is, that I suspected and watched your hopeful young guest, Willful Brande; detected him in consultation with your other 'guide, philosoper, and friend,' old Timon; discovered their plan to liberate you, and determined not only to *prevent* it, but to avail myself of it, to get you more thoroughly into my power. So I had old Timon quietly in irons, turned a key privately upon Master Willful, and offered myself beneath your window as his substitute."

"Miscreant! why have you done this?" exclaimed the young girl indignantly.

"Do not call ill names, and I will tell you, my dear," replied Luxmore, with a deliberate softness of tone that seemed to taste and chew the sweetness of revenge,—"I will tell you my beloved! While you remained on the Island, you were in some measure out of my power, for there were present a clergyman and a lawyer, to say nothing of your lover to protect you in an emergency. But having detected you in a plot to leave the Island, I availed myself of the opportunity of entrapping you! Your life and honor are now absolutely at my mercy."

Etoile clasped her fingers convulsively and threw her eyes despairingly over the solitary waste of sky and water, as if in hopeless appeal for help. In after years she remembered the dark, silent, somber scene, as if it had been daguerreotyped forever on her brain. A single ship, dimly seen, lay at anchor, a short distance off; a lantern burning at her prow, threw a long line of light a cable's length ahead, just across their course.

Withdrawing her eyes from this dreary prospect, she turned them upon the dark figure of her guide.

"Traitor! whither are you taking me?"

"I will inform you, my sweet! To the Northumberland coast, to a lonely cabin of which I keep the key; which shall become the bower of my bride; and from which, when she shall emerge, she will be but too happy to have the state and church legalize and sanctify our union!" he answered, with deliberate and demoniac malice.

Etoile, who "understood a *horror* in his words, but not the words," started and recoiled to the farthest limits of her seat. They were now approaching that long line of light from the lantern in the prow of the ship at anchor that lay in their way. She cast a startled glance at the water beneath, and then a despairing gaze at the ship beyond. Oh, that ship! so near, yet for all purposes of help, so far!

Julius Luxmore saw both look and gesture, and laughed aloud, exclaiming scornfully—"Ah, pretty one! even you see at length that you cannot escape me—'in testimony whereof, behold my hand and seal'"—and drawing in the oars, regardless of the danger of rocking the boat he darted towards her, and would have seized and embraced her; but with a terrible cry, Etoile sprang into the sea, the waves of which immediately closed over her form!

So sudden, so startling, so appalling had been this act, that Julius Luxmore for an instant remained panic stricken! but the next moment, he quickly threw off his coat, and placed himself on watch for her re-appearance.

She arose above the surface of the water, at some distance from the boat, nearer the ship, and attempted to strike out bravely for the latter, but being embarrassed and weighed down by her clothing, she made no progress, and even strove in vain to keep afloat. Recovering from his first consternation, and seeing her extremity, Julius Luxmore, with a shout of vindictive triumph, urged his boat towards her struggling form. In this unequal race he must soon have reached and re-captured his prize; but that the next instant a strong swimmer let himself drop from the bulwarks of the ship, and struck out gallantly for the sinking girl, whose form he seized, and bore victoriously to the starboard gangway ladder, and up upon the deck of the—Ocean Queen!—for this was the ship of Barbara Brande which had just an hour before dropped anchor here.

Etoile, half suffocated and half exhausted, gave vent to a convulsive sob, recovered her breath, looked up to thank her brave preserver, and recognized Willful Brande!

"Oh, may heaven repay you! but how should *you* be here whom I thought detained upon the Island?" she exclaimed, in a deeply agitated voice.

"I will inform you presently, young lady; now let me present you to my sister," he replied, as Barbara Brande advanced from the stern sheets.

But before they met, at the instant of Willful's speaking, a boat touched the side of the vessel and Julius Luxmore sprung up the ladder and stood upon the deck.

"Where is the girl you picked up, fellow? Deliver her to me; she is my fugitive child!" he exclaimed, advancing towards the group.

"Save me! save me!" cried Etoile springing for protection to the bosom of Barbara.

"Be composed, you *are* saved!" returned the deep, low voice of the noble girl, as she folded one arm around the shrinking form of the little maiden, and lifted the other with outstretched hand to bar the nearer approach of the intruder.

"Give up that child instantly to her natural protector," he exclaimed, in a peremptory tone. It was as yet so dark in this quarter of the vessel that, being still a few paces distant, he had not recognized the persons to whom he spoke.

"Light the lanterns," ordered Barbara, in that clear, ringing, resonant voice that struck him as a sound familiar, yet long unheard.

And in another instant lights blazed from all parts of the vessel, giving to full view, all the persons on the deck.

And Barbara Brande and Julius Luxmore stood face to face! For a second, the traitor quailed before her calm, clear, commanding gaze; but the next moment, rallying his courage, with desperate assurance, he said—

"Deliver up my ward! I *insist* upon it."

"Insist then, by all means, since it amuses you to do so!" replied Barbara, with cool contempt.

"*Will* you give up my ward?" he demanded, with rage.

"Oh, certainly; how can you doubt it!" mocked Barbara.

"Answer seriously, woman!"

"It would be absurd to answer seriously, just as if you had a right to ask!"

"Release that child, I command you, girl!" he exclaimed, furiously.

"How I should love to obey your command, especially as I *adore* tyrants!" sneered Barbara.

Maddened with rage he strode forward to seize the maiden.

"BACK, SIR, AT YOUR PERIL!" thundered Barbara, with eyes blazing with defiance, and arm extended in command, as she still sustained the maiden upon her broad bosom.

Luxmore recoiled before the "embodied storm" he had provoked.

Willful had sprung to the side of his sister, to protect both her and her charge.

"Stand aside, Willful, my son! Edwy, call all hands up!" she ordered, in her customary clear, resounding tones.

And in a moment every man was on deck.

"Listen now to me, Julius Luxmore. Regain the custody of this girl you—can—not! either by law, force, or fraud! You are free to depart in peace, and if, in two minutes, you do not leave the ship, I will have you put in irons and delivered up to the nearest authority."

"By what right, lawless woman, do you *dare* do this!" exclaimed Luxmore, in a voice of concentrated rage.

"That is a question that I shall know how to answer before the proper tribunal. You have heard the conditions of your being permitted to depart in peace. One minute has elapsed; with you I talk no more. Edwy, bring hither the manacles," she said, with quiet resolution.

"SHE-WOLF! you shall suffer for this!" cried Luxmore, turning white as a leper, shaking his fist convulsively, and grinding his teeth with fury, as he retreated down the ladder to regain his boat.

"Wrecked! wrecked! wrecked! worse than from the deck of the Mercury! Lost! lost! lost! a girl's dream and a man's soul!" murmured Barbara, unconsciously, in a tone of deep anguish, as she watched his receding skiff. Then, burying her despair deep in her own heart, she looked upon her trembling charge, who still nestled to her bosom, and said—

"Look up, sweet girl! your tormentor has gone! You are now quite safe. Come below and change your dress to lie down and rest."

It was now growing light.

Barbara took her charge down into the cabin; relieved her of her dripping clothes; supplied their place with loose and comfortable garments; made her drink a glass of cordial, and led her to her own state-room to lie down and sleep. But, before seeking repose, Etoile kneeled beside the berth and silently offered up her thanks to Heaven for the preservation of her life. Barbara lingered until the little maiden had laid her head upon the pillow; then kissed her, drew the cover over her shoulders, closed the blinds, and stole softly out of the state-room.

She crossed the cabin to an opposite door, and listened to hear if there were any stirring within. The sound of light footsteps and low voices met her ear. She rapped softly, and the door was opened by Susan Copsewood.

"Your lady is awake, Susan?"

"Yes, Miss Brande, come in."

"Yes, come in, dear girl. I have been awake for hours," said the sweet voice of Estelle.

Barbara entered, and sat down beside the berth where the lady reclined.

"The noise on deck I suppose awoke you, Madam."

"Yes."

"We were dropping the anchor and taking in sail. We are near the Island," said Barbara, who wished to prepare her guest for the next good news.

"Near the Island at last! It is now almost sunrise! How soon shall we be landed?" inquired Estelle, eagerly rising upon her elbow, and flinging back the long black ringlets that had escaped her cap and fallen—a shadowy veil around her eloquent pale face.

"You may see your daughter Etoile within an hour," answered Barbara.

Estelle's countenance beamed with joy.

"You may see her even sooner if you can dress in less time!" continued Miss Brande.

"Susan, my dressing gown! hand me my shoes! bind up my hair! Dearest Barbara, I shall be ready as soon as you can have the boat prepared," said Estelle, leaving her berth.

"There is no need to prepare the boat," said Miss Brande, significantly.

"Oh! Barbara, what mean you?" exclaimed the lady, pausing in the preparation of her toilet, and gazing in an agony of anxiety upon her friend.

"Etoile is very near you."

"Where? where?" cried Estelle, starting up and going towards the door.

"Lady, be calm and I will give you every satisfaction," replied Barbara, taking her hand and gently but firmly re-seating her.

"One word—is she safe?"

"Safe, unmarried, unharmed, but also unprepared as yet to meet her mother. Lady, listen. I will tell you everything, and—within half an hour, I will bring you to your daughter."

"Oh, is it possible? am I awake and in my senses? shall I see Etoile?"

"In less than half an hour! Compose yourself and hear," said Barbara, who then commenced and related all the circumstances of the storm; the shipwreck; the saving of Willful; the subsequent eclaircissement between Etoile and himself in respect to her guardian; the arrival of Luxmore; the attempted flight of Etoile; the treachery to which she was subjected; her abduction by Julius Luxmore; her desperate escape and effort to swim to the ship; her rescue by Willful Brande; the coming on board of Luxmore; and, finally, the ignominious dismissal of the latter from the ship. She concluded by saying—

"And now, as I deemed it necessary that she should rest before having another subject of excitement, I refrained from speaking of her mother, and left her to repose."

"Miss Brande! oh, let me gaze upon her in her sleep!" prayed the lady, clasping her hands.

"I will first see if she is sleeping, Madam," replied Barbara, leaving the state-room. In a few minutes she returned, and said—

"She is sleeping the deep sleep of exhaustion—you can enter softly, lady."

With a wildly beating heart and suspended breath Estelle passed into the opposite state-room, sat down beside the berth, and gazed upon her daughter. Beautiful was that sleeping image. One snowy arm doubled up on the pillow, supported her blooming face; her white eyelids were lightly closed over the violet eyes, the lashes lying delicately pencilled on her fresh rose cheeks; her golden hair flowed in glittering disorder down over forehead, side face and bosom; her other arm drooped gracefully over the counterpane.

Estelle gazed in a sort of still rapture upon her lovely child, longing, yet afraid, ever so lightly to touch her. At length the temptation to lay her lips upon that seraph face grew irresistible, and light as the fall of a winter rose-leaf on the snow, dropped the mother's first kiss upon the maiden's pure brow. Soft as was the touch, Etoile felt it in her sleep; her ruby lips parted in a smile; her eyelids half unclosed.

Estelle, fearful of surprising her, arose and quietly withdrew from the room.

Half an hour after Barbara entered—Etoile was lying wide awake, her rosy lips half parted, her violet eyes half veiled in a dreamy smile.

How do you feel, my dear?" inquired Barbara.

"Ah! Miss Brande, I have had such a sweet dream! so seeming real that I can scarcely dispel the illusion! I was dreaming of my mother; I thought that she was living, and that she had found me; I thought she was sitting by my bed, and oh! she was so beautiful! so beautiful! just what I supposed her to be! just like the miniature I painted of her, only so much more divinely beautiful! I dreamed she stooped and pressed the softest kiss upon my brow, and while her lips were on my forehead, and her soft black ringlets touched my cheeks, I awoke and found it was all a dream! And yet, withal, it still seems so real that I can scarcely believe I dreamed," said Etoile, closing her eyes and smiling as if to charm back the vision.

"But suppose it was no dream, dear girl?" said Barbara, in an agitated voice.

Etoile's eyes flared wide open, and her color went and came.

"Suppose it was a reality—suppose that your mother really did sit beside you in your sleep, and withdrew when you awoke?

A tumultuous rush of emotion crimsoned and paled her face, and took away her breath as she eagerly listened.

"What if your mother had met with Madeleine in New York, had heard of your existence and residence, and had embarked on this very vessel to seek you at the Island?"

"Oh, it is! it is so! I have seen my mother! I have had her kiss!" cried Etoile, shaken, as a rose tree is shaken by a storm—"where, where, Miss Brande, where is she now?"

"Here, my beloved child! here, my long lost darling, here!" cried the voice of the lady, as she opened the door and entered.

Etoile sprung up in a sitting position, and threw herself toward the lady who opened her arms to receive her, and murmuring—"Mother"—fell fainting upon her bosom. No possible care could have prepared Etoile for a meeting like this! It must necessarily have overwhelmed her.

"Joy never kills—be not uneasy," said Barbara, as she lifted the fainting girl from the bosom of Estelle, and replaced her on the berth. And indeed their united efforts soon recalled the absent senses of their charge. Then Barbara, with her eyes full of tears, withdrew and left the mother and child together.

Who can describe that first interview, indeed for many reasons indescribable? But who can *not* picture to themselves, the first tumultuous emotion; the strange, dreamy joy; the first incoherent conversation; the sudden plunge into the past history of each; the breathless questions and answers; the impulsive embraces; the long, silent pauses, with the form of the maiden pressed closely within the arms of the mother; and at last the calmer hour, when this strong emotion had subsided, and both sat quietly side by side, comparing the story of their late lives, or rather Etoile giving up the whole of hers to her mother's earnest inquiries.

Like two lovely sisters they looked, the one so dark, the other so fair, yet both alike in features, form and air, and both so surpassingly beautiful!

The prophecy of both hearts was now fulfilled. The mother had found her child—the child her mother! And for the time being the whole world was forgotten.

Barbara long delayed the breakfast; but when the hour of nine arrived, she thought that even for the good health of those two absorbed creatures, she should call them. So going to the state-room door, she rapped, and said—

"Breakfast awaits your leisure, lady."

"I thank you, Miss Brande," said the voice of Estelle, who immediately opened the door, and led her daughter to her own state room, where Susan Copsewood waited.

"Little shipwrecked maiden, you must wear your mother's dress," said the lady, as she seated the girl on the side of the berth. Then seeing Susan she added—

"Etoile, this young woman is the faithful friend of whom I told you. Susan, speak to my child."

But poor, good Susan, was too deeply moved to speak, and only took the hand of the maiden, raised it to her lips and burst into tears. Etoile pressed *her* hand and looked gratefully in her face. Then with affectionate zeal, Susan dressed her "young lady" as she termed her mistress's daughter. And soon they passed out to breakfast. The table was spread in the cabin, Barbara presided over the coffee service.

"I miss some one here—my favorite, Willful, now doubly dear to me as the preserver of my daughter's life. Where is he, Miss Brande?" inquired the lady, as she took her seat at the board.

"Willful refrains from intruding, yet I know he would be happy to pay his respects to you, Madam." answered Barbara.

"Then pray have him called."

Edwy arose from his place and summoned his brother.

Willful entered the cabin, bowing. The lady looked up and held out her hand.

"Mr. Brande, all human words and thanks are poor and weak to express how much I owe you for the protection of this child. God grant that in the future, Willful, I may be able to prove what I now feel!" said the mother, as her bosom heaved and her eyes overflowed.

Willful, with much grace, lifted the hand of the lady respectfully to his lips, and said—

"Madam, I am more blessed than I ever deserved to be, in having been, in ever so humble a degree, able to serve you, and——" he paused suddenly and sent a swift shy glance at Etoile. The lady followed that glance and saw the quick blushes of both youth and maiden as their eyes met. She saw and understood and thought—

"Is it so? Well, well, he has saved her life and honor! Let him keep the fair promise of his youth! Let him be worthy of her, and when a proper time comes he shall have her!"

"Sit down, Willful, and take a cup of coffee," said his sister, to break up an embarrassing pause. He seated himself and the breakfast went forward.

After the morning meal was over, there was a consultation in the cabin.

"It will be necessary for you, lady, to go to the county town to take certain legal steps to enable you to assume the guardianship of your daughter and her patrimony. The county town is Eastville, which, you know, lies back of my old home, the Headland. Therefore, if you please, we will steer directly for the Headland."

The lady eagerly acquiesced. And in half-an-hour the anchor was got up and the ship set sail for her new destination.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE RE-UNION.

> "'Twas his own voice, she could not err,
> Throughout the breathing world's extent,
> There was but one such voice for her,
> So kind, so soft, so eloquent! MOORE.
>
> There's not a look, a word of thine,
> My soul hath e'er forgot!
> Thou ne'er didst bid a ringlet shine,
> Nor give thy locks one graceful twine,
> Which I remember not!" IBID.

At eleven o'clock the Ocean Queen cast anchor off the Headland. The long boat was lowered, and the mother and daughter, with Barbara and her two brothers, entered it and were rowed across to the beach. They landed, and began to ascend the bank. At the top they overtook old Neptune, with a basket of soft crabs in his hand. His mistress took him aside and spoke to him.

"Has any one come, Neptune?"

"Lors yes, chile, come dis mornin'—four, five, ever so fine folks, an' the fine English lords as was here some years back. Amphy, she done gone up to get dinner. I gwine carry up de fish now."

"Very well, go on," said Barbara, who then returned to the side of Estelle. They were approaching the house.

"It appears to me that the place is occupied," said Estelle.

"Madam—yes! it is occupied temporarily"

They ascended the steps, and paused a moment at the door.

"Lady!" said Barbara, "you have fine nerves, and the great self-control that they give—exert it now!"

"Miss Brande, what mean you?" inquired Estelle, in some alarm.

"I told you that your parents were seeking you!"

"Yes—well?"

"They are not far off. Come into your old bed chamber and lay off your bonnet, and compose yourself for a few minutes," said Miss Brande, opening the door, and conducting Estelle and her daughter into a back room. Then, while they arranged their dress, she passed into the parlor and closed the door after her. And though a lady of distinguished presence and three gentleman occupied the room, she lifted her finger to her lip as a sign of silence, and advanced straight up to the youngest of those gentlemen. He arose to receive her, saying, in a low voice:—

"Miss Brande, your letter has brought not only myself, but, as you see, our whole party—Sir Parke, Lady Morelle, and Dazzleright. Oh, Barbara! surely you could not hold out any but a certain hope!"

"Speak softly, Lord Eagle Tower! She is not far off. She does not know your presence here."

Sir Parke who had also approached the spot where she stood, heard this piece of news and reeled as if he would have fallen. Lady Morelle hastened to his side, and led him to the nearest seat, wiped the beaded drops from his brow, and held her vinaigrette to his nostrils. Her ladyship had, certainly, the most self-command of the whole party. As soon as the enfeebled old father recovered his composure, Barbara took Lord Eagle Tower aside and said:—

"I will bring her in now. You and Lord Dazzleright had best retire for a few minutes.

He nodded—he could scarcely speak—for he too was very much shaken.

Barbara slipped through the door, and met face to face with Estelle, who was standing there as rigid and as white as marble, with her eyes staring towards the parlor.

Barbara closed the door, took her hand, and led her a little way back into the chamber.

"Lady—dear Madam, what is the matter?"

"Montressor! Montressor!—If ever I heard Montressor's voice, I heard it just now! Oh! it was so low, yet I heard it!"

"Yes! you heard it! Compose yourself, dear lady! Summon your great strength and go in! Leave Miss L'Orient here with me a moment," and she opened the door.

Estelle passed through and entered the shadowy parlor—the tumult of her mind causing the scene to swim before her—so that at first she could not distinguish persons.

But an aged form tottered towards her and fell upon her neck, saying:—

"Oh, Estelle—my child! my child! can you pardon your old father?"

She sank at his feet and kissed his hands, and said:—

"Forgive and bless *me*, my father."

But Sir Parke, the subdued and broken old autocrat, could only weep and lift her up, and hand her over to her mother, who, with a burst of tears, received her in her arms. Estelle sat down between them both, upon the sofa, and wept while she pressed her mother's hand, or stroked her father's cheek, and told them of the long lost child that she too had recovered. Then Etoile was brought in and presented to her grand-parents, who contemplated her beauty with pride and pleasure.

But at last Lady Morelle said:—

"There is another who is waiting to see our Estelle. Came, Sir Parke, take your grandchild in your hand and let us pass into the adjoining room, and give this faithful friend an opportunity to plead his cause."

The baronet arose, and leading Etoile and accompanied by his wife, passed into the back chamber.

Estelle sank upon the sofa—the beating of her heart was almost audible.

A moment passed and Lord Eagle Tower was in the room, and at her side.

What was first said on either side they could not have told!—how should another? It was a most agitated, tumultuous interview, in which all that either learned at first was, that neither heart was changed towards the other. Lord Eagle Tower learned the meaning of the sacrifice that she had made. And she discovered the supererogatory nature of her long self-immolation.

And finally he said—

"My Estelle! my love! my wife! you deemed that ever *I* could forget *you* and marry? I! Oh, my own! all these years of absence have you only taken root deeper and deeper into my heart! become more and more knitted to my soul! My wife! my innermost self, not now, not to-day only, but always and forever, from eternity to eternity, my own! Oh, suffering one! and did you think that time or absence had power to steal *you* from my heart? or that another could ever fill your place there? Impossible in fact! sacrilegious in theory! No, Estelle; no, dearest wife! my heart's innermost treasure! no. I lived amid a pageantry of beautiful and attractive women, as lovely, perhaps, as my Estelle. But not one among them was mine, or ever could be mine, because my heart was abundantly filled. I moved among them, my eyes enjoying, in common with others, the sight of their beauty and grace, but without the slightest wish to appropriate any among them. I moved amid the beautiful, even as though I had been a happy husband, with his whole heart filled, his whole nature abundantly satisfied with the wife of his choice. For my heart was full of the love of my only possible wife, though her presence lighted another hemisphere!"

Draw the veil. The full interview between such hearts so deeply tried, so long severed, so unexpectedly re-united, is almost too sacred for description.

But little more remains to be told.

That same afternoon a messenger sent to Heathville brought back the worthy Doctor Goodloe with a special license, and before the set of sun Estelle became Lady Eagle Tower.

They remained a few days at the Headland, during which Lady Eagle Tower applied for, and received, full powers of guardianship over the person and property of her child. It is needless to say that that child was received with paternal affection by Lord Eagle Tower.

In a few days they set sail for Washington, where Lord Eagle Tower received dispatches appointing him to proceed at once to the Court of —— upon certain diplomatic business. He immediately obeyed the order and departed, accompanied by his lady and her whole family. Willful Brande was to visit them there, whenever his professional duties would permit him to do so. Lord Dazzleright renewed his proposition to the beautiful Amazon, but Barbara gratefully and firmly declined the man and the coronet.

* * * * * * * *

Susan Copsewood married Mr. Gridley, Lord Eagle Tower's "gentleman," and both continue in the service of their former master and mistress. Susan has entirely recovered from her transient fear of ghosts, and is even more incredulous than ever upon the subject of the re-appearance of departed spirits; for in several confidential conversations with her mistress, she has discovered that the supposed apparition of the spirit of Blanche Brande, that haunted the old family burial-ground, and peeped in at her window, was no other than her own dear lady, Estelle, who, restless from grief, had nightly left her sleepless couch to spend an hour or two in wandering through the solitary groves.

Years have flown. Lord and Lady Eagle Tower reside in great splendor, surrounded by their interesting family, at the Eastern Court, where he is resident minister. The fate of Luxmore is unknown.

Barbara Brande still sails upon the sea, and promises to leave it only when her brother Willful, who is now a commander in the navy, shall be united to his promised bride—Etoile L'Orient, the lovely Island Princess.

THE END.

A WISE FATHER AND TEACHER.

The following excellent passage from the celebrated Dr. Beattie's "Life of his son," cannot fail of being read with interest and admiration by every parent in the land:—

"The doctrines of religion I wished to impress on his mind, as soon as it might be prepared to receive them; but I did not see the propriety of making him commit to memory theological sentences, or any sentences which it was not possible for him to understand. And I was desirous to make a trial how far his own reason would go in tracing out, with a little direction, the great and first principle of all religion, the being of God. The following fact is mentioned, not as a proof of superior sagacity in him (for I have no doubt that most children would, in like circumstances, think as he did) but merely as a moral and religious experiment.

"He had reached his fifth (or sixth) year, knew the alphabet, and could read a little, but had received no particular information with respect to the Author of his being, because I thought he could not yet understand such information; and because I had learned from my own experience, that to be made to repeat words not understood is extremely detrimental to the faculties of a young mind. In a corner of a little garden, without informing any person of the circumstance, I wrote in the mould, with my fingers, the three initial letters of his name, and sowing garden-cresses in the furrows, covered up the seed and smoothed the ground. Ten days after he came running to me, and, with astonishment in his countenance, told me that his name was growing in the garden. I smiled at the report, and seemed inclined to disregard it; but he insisted on my going to see what had happened.

"'Yes,' said I, carelessly, on coming to the place, 'I see it is so; but there is nothing in this worth notice; it is mere chance;' and I went away. He followed me, and taking hold of my coat said, with some earnestness:—'It could not be mere chance, for that somebody must have contrived matters so as to produce it.' I pretend not to give his words or my own, for I have forgotten both; but I give the substance of what passed between us in such language as we both understood. 'So you think,' I said, 'that what appears so regular as the letters of your name cannot be by chance.' 'Yes,' said he, with firmness, 'I think so.' 'Look at yourself,' I replied, 'and consider your hands and fingers, your legs and feet, and other limbs; are they not regular in their appearance and useful to you?' He said 'they were.' 'Came you then hither,' said I, 'by chance?' 'No,' he answered, 'that cannot be; something must have made me.' 'And who is that something?' I asked. He said he did not know. (I took particular notice that he did not say, as Rousseau fancies a child in like circumstances would say, that his parents made him).

"I had now gained the point I aimed at; and saw that his reason taught him (though he could not express it) that what begins to be must have a cause, and that what is formed with regularity must have an intelligent cause. I therefore told him the name of the Great Being who made him and all the world; concerning whose adorable nature I gave him such information as I thought he could in some measure comprehend. The lesson affected him greatly, and he never forgot either it or the circumstances that introduced it."

NATIONAL CURIOSITIES OF COURTSHIP.

In Kamschatka, a young man, after making proposals, enters into the service of his intended father-in-law; and if he prove agreeable, he is admitted to the trial of "the touch." The young woman is swaddled up in leathern thongs, and is put under the guard of some old women: the suitor watches every opportunity of a slackened vigilance to salute her. The girl must resist, in appearance at least, and therefore cries out, to summon her guards, who fall with fury upon the lover—tear his hair, scratch his face, and act in violent opposition. The attempts of the lover are sometimes unsuccessful for months; but the moment "the touch" is achieved, the bride testifies her satisfaction by pronouncing "Ni, ni," with a soft and loving voice. This ceremony was also usual in Lithuania and Muscovy.

In Livonia the young man engages the services of an old woman, who usually officiates for a whole parish in succession, to propose to the girl of whose qualifications he has heard a favorable account. The old lady sets about her business cleverly—dwells on the good looks or fine disposition of her client, and especially on the vehemence of his attachment—for even a savage knows the kind of flattery most preferable to a woman's heart. If she succeed in obtaining a favorable answer, the parties meet at the pastor's house for the ceremony of betrothal; if not, the old lady is sent to a succession of girls, on a similar errand, until she does—for when a Livonian lad has made up his mind to get married, he thinks the sooner he gets over it the better. On the wedding-day it is customary to make every vehicle turn off the road for the procession, which proceeds to the house of the bridegroom, singing a low chant that rings very pleasingly through the dells. Gloves suspended to a shaft of the vehicle containing the bride and bridegroom are supposed to bring good luck to whoever reaches them first, and are eagerly caught after by the guests who are awaiting the arrival. The bride is then lifted from the cart at one bound, on to a sheepskin extended before the door, to signify that the way through life is henceforth to be soft to her feet; then corn is strewed before her, in emblem that abundance is to follow her in her new home; and thus she is carried in noisy triumph over her husband's threshhold. Here, propped in a high-backed chair, and surrounded by women, sits the oldest matron of the family, ready to receive the new-comer. The bride bends before her, and the matron takes a high, stiff cap, made of white silk, and places it on the young wife's head. When the cap has been slowly adjusted, the dame repeats this ancient form of words:—"Forget thy sleep—Remember thy youth—Love thy husband;" accompanying each sentence with a slight stroke on the cheek.

PROVIDING FOR THE FUTURE.—As man is a being very sparingly furnished with the power of prescience, he can provide for the future only by considering the past; and as futurity is all in which he has any real interest, he ought very diligently to use the only means by which he can be enabled to enjoy it, and frequently to revolve the experiments which he has hitherto made upon life, that he may gain wisdom from his mistakes, and caution from his miscarriages.

PROVERBS FOR FAST MEN.—Procrastination is the soul of business. A pint in the pewter is worth two in the jug. Show me a man's cigars and I will tell you what tobacco he smokes. You may smoke your merschaum as long as you please; we must all come to clay at last.

LEONORE.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

"And 'twas well that when she died
They made Maud a grave beside
The blue pulses of the tide."

Sleep thou by the storied sea,
Though my heart should break for thee,
Idol early lost to me,
Lovely Leonore.

Spirits of the dark blue wave
All the night watch o'er thy grave,
Lest the winds that rudely rave
Wake thee, Leonore.

And the angels of the sky,
Bending from the stars, reply:
She is blessed now! why sigh,
Fated Leonore?

Oh, thy mournful brow was fair;
And the fatal genius there
Was so splendid and so rare,
My poor Leonore.

Often in the lonely night,
Comes there, through the misty light,
Some pale form, in robes of white,
Like thee, Leonore.

Sadness on the cold brow lies,
And the mournful, hazel eyes
Gaze all tearful on the skies—
Wherefore, Leonore?

I have planted o'er thy grave
Fairest flowers—but soon the wave,
Rising, swept them to some cave
From thee, Leonore.

Ah, while thou wert doomed to weep,
Thus did fate's black billows sweep
Passion-buds from o'er thy deep,
Young bosom, Leonore.

So sleep on beside the sea—
It were well if all, *like thee*,
Rested now as peacefully,
Gifted Leonore.

◆

A SENSIBLE MAN.

HOW ARTHUR PERCY WON HIS BRIDE.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.

"No sensible man," said Mr. Dell, "will ever renew a rejected offer of marriage."

"But how," answered the lady to whom his remark was addressed, "how if the lady did not know her own mind, and he were aware of that fact?"

"Any sensible woman would be sure to know her own mind," Mr. Dell replied; "and her answer should be considered as final. The idea of a man persisting in the renewal of an offer once refused! Bah, it sickens me!"

"But the idea does not seem to me so very absurd," Mrs. Hayward resumed; "I can easily conceive of circumstances in which a man would be throwing away his best chances of happiness, in quietly yielding up the attempt to win the heart and hand once denied him. Many extremely sensible women, Mr. Dell, and you must really pardon me for differing from you, require time to learn the merits of their lovers and to grow into a knowledge of their own hearts. It may sound like a humiliating confession from a woman's lips, but I truly believe many of my sisters go through life with blighted, barren hearts, simply because they once from pique, or real or unconscious coquetry, or surprise, or lack of understanding their own emotions, or whatever motive was strongest at the time, refused the offered hands of the men whom they should have married. A great many of these prove themselves sensible women by steadfastly refusing afterwards to marry without love; others, by a martyr-like perseverance in a struggle with their own hearts till they win a victory and peace; while others, soured and embittered in feeling, join the ranks of ancient maidenhood and help to deepen the contempt with which the world looks upon that lonely but not necessarily loveless class of humanity. And others, most fatal wrong of all, carry perjury to the altar, and allow the ring which is for them at once the bond of the most woeful slavery, and the seal of the most hideous lie, to be pressed upon their unwilling fingers."

"Nevertheless, Mrs. Hayward, I hold to my first opinion. Sensible persons who have arrived at a marriageable age, should know their own minds, and be reasonable in their love affairs, just as in all other affairs of life. No man should offer himself to a woman from whom he has not received sufficient encouragement, consciously or unconsciously, to leave no reasonable doubt of his acceptance by her. And you ladies are shrewd enough to know very well when you have got a poor fellow in your toils. Surprise, indeed! Do you intend to assert, Mrs. Hayward, that a woman was ever taken by surprise by an offer of marriage?"

"Certainly I do, and that in the face of your assertion to the contrary, and simply because you are talking a theory, and I gain my opinions from observation—yes, and from experience, too. I never recollect to have been more thoroughly surprised than when I was a blooming lassie of sixteen, and your brother, Mr. Dell, a middle-aged widower, offered to make me Mrs. Dell and the mistress of his household, as well as mamma to Frank Dell, who, to my certain knowledge, is not a year younger than myself."

"I am bound to believe you, Mrs. Hayward; but, acknowledge that this was an exceptional case."

"Indeed I will not, then, for such surprises occur every day, even where the parties are suitable in age and condition; and it is in such cases where I believe a sensible man will try his fate a second time."

"What—submit to the possibility of a second mortifying repulse? I cannot acknowledge it."

"That I can well believe, else I am sure Mr. Dell would not have remained a bachelor until today. Sometimes I have doubted whether your sensitive fear of a refusal would have allowed you to make even the first offer."

"You are personal, my dear madam."

"I acknowledge it, and—to change the direction of my remarks—do you think Arthur Percy a sensible man?"

"My dear Mrs. Hayward, how can you doubt it? No man stands higher in my esteem than he."

"Do you know anything of his history? And as you accompanied Mr. Hayward and myself to his wedding last week, what did you think of his bride, and of the fitness of the marriage?"

"You know that I thought Percy had made an excellent choice. I regarded Miss Manners as the woman of all others most calculated to make him happy. Her serene self-control arrested my attention at once; but I observed beneath it a latent energy that I thought had been repressed by long habit, but was what was wanting to preserve the balance in their married life, as in direct contrast to Percy's dreamy habit of thought. But—no, I know almost nothing of his history."

"You do know, perhaps, that Arthur Percy is the son of my step-mother—that excellent woman who made our home so beautiful and happy for many years, and who has only lately gone to her rest. Arthur Percy was a child of six years when my father brought him with his mother to our home. He lived there with us as our brother—a very dear brother to me, who was near his age, and much younger than my own brothers.

"Of course I know him well—thoroughly. I was the confidant of all his childish fancies—of the strifes and emulations of his school days—of the struggles of his early manhood. No one knows better than I the sensitive, shrinking delicacy of his nature. No one knows better what an intensely passionate life is hidden beneath that quiet, dreamy exterior, nor how powerful are the feelings that burn, and thrill, and surge in his soul at times when neither by word, or look, or act, does he express more than the unruffled calm of his usual aspect.

"When such a man loves it is with no fleeting devotion. He worships forever at the earliest shrine of his adoration, he loves with his whole being, and only the dissolution of that being can destroy his love. I used to tremble as I listened to the impassioned utterances of Arthur's poet-soul, poured out in verse, long before he had written of love, except from an innate consciousness of his own capacity for loving. I knew that as he wrote he would feel—his verse being the transcript of emotions otherwise unawakened, and I dreaded lest he should love unwisely or unrequitedly—dreaded lest repulse or change should break the fine chords so sensitively attuned to the deepest harmonies of the universal passion. Yet I hoped that he might find his happiness in the hour of his heart's awakening, and awaited the result with an interest deepened by my own happy marriage with Mr. Hayward.

"Soon after Arthur left college, he went, in pursuance of the object of his profession, that of topographical engineer, into the northern part of New England to superintend the construction of a projected railroad. Every week brought us letters from him, and we were very glad to know that he was contented in his new situation, and was gathering around him many excellent acquaintances and a few choice friends. From other sources we learned that in the city where he had taken up his abode he was looked upon as a rising young man, and was as highly esteemed for his great worth, as for his undoubted abilities.

"We learned that he was much in society, and from himself, from time to time, we received descriptions of the ladies he met, none of whom, however, seemed to awake in him a warmer feeling than that of friendship. After a year or two, however, he mentioned one name more frequently than another in his letters—that of Laura Manners.

"He described Miss Manners as a gay, graceful girl, not strictly beautiful, but to him most charming. She was so innocently vivacious, so enchanting in her sunny cheerfulness, that was always delicate and refined, she betrayed in every act such a child-like purity and transparency of character, that he owned he had been attracted towards her from the first, and at length, to me, who had ever been, as he said, 'his other self,' he confided how he loved her with the whole strength of his intensely passionate nature.

"'Oh, Ada!' he would write, 'if Laura Manners would but love me and be mine, the world would seem all too small to contain the great happiness that would surround my being. And yet I dare not ask this lovely creature to be my wife. I am so grave and seem so old beside the buoyant youthfulness which seems to float about her. I dare not put my fate to the test, for a repulse would destroy me. As yet she knows nothing of my feelings. I am conscious of being unusually silent, and am oppressed with an almost painful reserve when in her presence. Soon after she returned from school, and I first met her, I heard her whisper to her sister, 'Is this the interesting Arthur Percy about whom you were always writing to me? Is he a poet? If so he keeps all his fine fancies for his own benefit, for I am sure that I have scarcely heard him speak the whole evening, except in that prosy political discussion with papa.' I assure you, Ada, I have been if possible more reserved in her presence, since that unlucky whisper floated to my ear, than ever before. What must she think of me—of course she cannot love me, and my hopes are as fruitless as they are intense.'

"I wrote, urging him either to learn his fate at once, or to withdraw from the society of this fascinating girl; but for a long time he continued to hover silently about her without, as it seemed, the power either to escape from her attractions, or to recommend himself to her regard.

"At length circumstances brought him suddenly to the crisis of his fate. It became necessary in the prosecution of his business, that he should remove from the city where Miss Manners resided. At the hour of parting the words that had so long hovered upon his lips, and yet remained unspoken, found utterance. He poured out the story of his love in words full of passionate eloquence. He told of all his trembling hopes, all his chilling fears; he laid bare before her the shrine where her image had so long been placed; he exhausted every epithet of love, and then he paused looking wistfully into her blushing, downcast face for his answer.

"The hand he had taken in his to say farewell, and forgotten to release in the moment when his repressed emotions burst their barrier of silence, still lay cold and passive in the clasp of his trembling palm. The pretty eyes were hidden beneath their long lashes, only the flickering blush betrayed that she heard his words with emotion. She was silent, and he waited till his sick heart told him that silence was his only answer. Still, he would not go without at least one word, and so he said, at length, and she roused herself to say how entirely she had been taken by surprise, how she had never expected this, and she feared—and there she paused. But Arthur had heard enough. He lifted the little trembling hand—trembling now with the grief she was trying to suppress—to his quivering lips, and without another word he went his way.

"Arthur came home—to my home—the shock of his rejection, though he believed before that he cherished no hopes, following the long struggle of his love, had made him seriously ill. I thought he had come home to die, but he slowly rallied, and before many weeks were passed was ready to take his place upon the battle-field of life once more. Many men would have called Laura Manners a coquette, and cursed all women for her falseness; but Arthur could not stoop to an injustice, and Laura was still the object of his reverence, as well as of his love.

"Laura began to love him from the moment she rejected him. You will say it was very strange—and so it may have been—but a woman of large-loving nature like hers, could hardly listen unmoved to the eloquent words she had heard addressed to her, could hardly catch glimpses of the happiness of a home in the heart laid before her, while her own was a fair page on which as yet no name was written, and not yield to the intense subtle magnetism of the spell.

"While his parting kiss was yet wet upon her hand, and ere yet the outer door had closed behind him, she would have given much for strength to call him back; but she dared not yield to her heart's impulse, and with eyes swimming in the bitterest tears she had ever shed, she saw him move slowly down the street bearing the burden of a disappointment none could measure so well as she.

"She loved him well and truly from that hour—she was like one overwhelmed with a bitter silent grief when the tidings of his dangerous illness reached her—she was like one in a trance of joy for days after the news of his recovery came to lift her gloom from her heart. She longed passionately to meet him once again; and yet when she did meet him the next winter, while visiting a friend in the city where he resided, she met him with a certain reserve that became almost impenetrable during the rare moments in which they chanced to be alone.

"Still, Arthur fancied he read some token of new interest in her manner—his love had lost nothing of its intensity—and so he spoke again, and again he was repulsed.

"Laura's maiden pride had taken the alarm. She feared he had detected her preference, she feared he was presuming upon her friendliness, and she said no—when she longed for nothing so much as to say yes—for nothing so much as to listen to those words of love in the low tone in itself so eloquent of feeling—to listen, and to reply, and to be happy.

"It was very foolish in Laura, no doubt, and very, very wrong. But years of sorrow have been her expiation. Years that have made her an orphan and cast her upon the world to rely only upon its grudging kindness and her own unaided toil; and years that lay like a dark shadow over Arthur Percy's life; and, though they brought him fame, and honor, and wealth, found him ever a sadder and more thoughtful man.

Chance at length accomplished for these separated lovers what neither would have dared to do—it brought them again into contact, and under circumstances where their former acquaintance was unavoidably made the opening for new friendly relations. Laura was traveling without escort, as, in her unprotected condition she had more than once been forced to do—a flood, which had submerged the railroads by which her journey must have been pursued, detained large numbers of passengers at one of the Western cities. At the hotel where she stopped she met Arthur Percy. The joy with which she greeted a familiar face could not be mistaken; he felt that the attentions he was longing to give would not be deemed obtrusive.

"Several days passed—the two, loving each other so well, met constantly—Arthur was insensibly placed in the character of Laura's temporary protector; it was very natural that once more the subject of a more permanent union should arise, especially as the words that had been spoken before were again trembling upon his lips. Again he asked Laura Manners to become his wife—she did not refuse—and last week you saw them married. And remember, Mr. Dell, that you have acknowledged beforehand that you consider Arthur Percy a sensible man."

"I do remember my acknowledgement, Mrs. Hayward, and, with thanks for your little story, I will not withdraw it. Still, I believe this must have been an exceptional case, and I am a little inclined to think that Arthur should have punished Miss Manners by keeping away from her, altogether, and only treating her with grave courtesy when they met."

"And have punished himself at the same time, Mr. Dell!" returned Mrs. Hayward, laughing gaily.

"There, you have the advantage of me, Mrs. Hayward. I acknowledge my defeat, and that in matters of the heart you ladies are always in the right. Arthur was a sensible man—all men are sensible in persevering to win the woman they love, and, by Jupiter, I, poor forlorn bachelor as I am, do envy the lucky fellows who gain a heart even the third time of asking."

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THE SECOND WIFE.

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

"O'er her clay pale and still,
What though he mourneth?
Soon from his sorrow chill
Wearied he turneth.

Soon o'er her buried head
Memory's light setteth,
And the true-hearted dead
Man soon forgetteth."

"And *must* I leave you—the dearest, sweetest, most tender husband that woman ever had? Oh, Henry, I do not want to die!" and the large imploring eyes of the pale, death-struck wife were fixed upon the husband, whose muscular frame was convulsed with an agony which seemed second only to that of death.

He could make no answer to that hopeless wail, but he bent lower over the wasted yet still beautiful one, and pressed his burning brow between her cold, pale hands.

"You poor, dear Henry! You *are* sorry to lose your loving wife. You cannot save me. I know that if your love *could* hold me, I should not die; but it cannot now avail. The voice of the chill waves has reached my ear. Oh, my husband—dearer than the life blood of my heart—I must leave you, and my little ones; you will miss me sorely, Henry; you will grieve sincerely. I know your loving and tender heart; but you will be comforted, and, it may be, *soon*. I ought not to wish it otherwise; but oh, my husband, when there is beside you a younger and a fairer bride, forget not *utterly* her whose true heart lies cold beneath the ground; and for her sake, because she prayed it of you with her dying breath, deal always kindly and affectionately with her motherless children."

"I will! I will, dear wife—so help me God." Thus groaned the husband.

A little longer, and, clinging to the last to the strong hands of her husband, the true wife went down into the river; and the voice that had been Henry's music never fell on his ear again.

She had been the love of his youth, and of his manhood; he thought that her life was entwined with the life of his heart. That he could ever again find joy in the love of woman, he did not once dream; the thought was sacrilege. Yet, ere eight months had passed over his head, he was rejoicing in the possession of a new bride!

She was young and handsome, gay and self-willed. She had married a rich and handsome man, and she was highly delighted because of her good fortune. There were three children, to be sure; three poor little, wild, shy creatures, that "made one nervous only to look at them;" and some of her friends had warned her to beware how she put herself into the hard and thankless position of a step-mother; but she had laughed at their fears, and assured them that her lover was sufficiently devoted to her to keep the children all out of her way. He'd send them to boarding-school, or even *drown them all*, if she only said the word.

She loved her fine-looking husband with a sort of selfish, sensual passion, and by her caresses and cajoleries, she acquired such ascendancy over his reason and will, that he was ready to do anything and everything she desired. He packed the children all off, to board and go to school in the country; he tore down partitions in the house, and tore up trees out of the house, to suit the whims of his Dido. After one had lived a month in the house with these two persons, he would never again wonder at the folly of Samson.

Celia, (that was the name of new wife,) was exceedingly fond of expensive clothing. The garments of her predecessor were very elegant and costly. They had been purchased with her own money; for, unlike Celia, the first Mrs. Severn had not come a dowerless bride to her husband's arms.

Celia ransacked every chest, trunk, and drawer in the entire house, and everything that she fancied she took for her own use; all that remained of the raiment of the first wife was then given to the sisters of the second.

When Amy Severn, the motherless daughter of Henry, came home for a visit, she could find nothing that had been her mother's save as she saw it transformed into some garment for the strangers with whom her father's house was overrun. Elegant velvet-faced wrappers were rigged on by the slovenly sisters of Celia, and with them switching here and there, those genteel young ladies would go into the kitchen and make cake or bread. Amy, child though she was, felt her blood boiling with indignation at the sight; but not a word did she dare to say.

It did not take the child long to discover that neither she nor her twin brothers, Alfred and Albert, had any longer an efficient friend or protector in their father's house; and when the time came for her departure, she made no objection to going back to the country.

Her brothers were rejoiced to see her, and were anxiously hoping that she would bring them news of a call to go home.

"For this man does whip us so, sis; we can't please him, any way we can fix it. We have tried to be good, but he scares us so that we *can't* learn our lessons, to save our lives. Won't father let us go back home?"

"You haven't got any home, boys; nor I haven't. Father's house won't ever be our home any more. Our rooms are all taken up. Everything mother left has been changed; all her clothes are used up; and nobody in the whole house wants us there. Oh, dear! oh, dear, dear! what a dreadful thing it is to have the mother die!" And the poor little girl dropped upon the grassy earth, and began to weep sorely, while her brothers cried from sympathy.

"Then have we got to stay here always, sister?" asked Albert, in a piteous tone.

"I don't know, dear brother, I'm sure I don't know, at all, what is going to become of us. But one thing I know—I wish that we had all been buried up with mamma, when they put her in the ground." And the child rocked to and fro, with her small hands covering her face.

The bitterness of elder years was waking in the heart of the child of fourteen.

It was true as she had said about her home. It was no more the same place. Celia had coaxed, and flattered, and teased, till she had brought about a complete alteration of all the household appointments. Could the spirit of the sleeping Amy have returned to the house and the chamber in which she died, it would hardly have known where it was. And would Amy have known for her dignified and self-possessed husband, the figure that was upon its knees at the feet of a pouting beauty seated on a crimson lounge?

"Get up, I tell you. It is no use for you to go on your knees to me. I'll never say I love you, and I'll never let you kiss me again, as long as you live, unless you solemnly promise to keep those young one's away from here for two years longer."

Not to spend time to repeat more of that conversation, it shall suffice to say that the promise was given, and peace restored.

A letter of complaint and entreaty from the children had caused their father to make an effort to obtain permission to recall them. Mr. Severn had taken it from the office the evening before; and as he rode homeward through the bright moonlight, he read it. It troubled him as he read thus, in the hand-writing of his daughter, "We are very unhappy here, dear father; we are afraid that even you do not love us; and we feel as though we had not a single friend in all the world." His horse stopped; Mr. Severn looked up; he was just opposite to the grave of his wife. The cold, white marble that stood above the heart that had so worthily and truly loved him, looked like a spirit standing there to reproach him. The memory, almost the sound, of Amy's parting charge came suddenly upon him—"For my sake, because I asked it with my dying breath, deal always kindly and affectionately with my children." A shudder shook his frame, and a sharp arrow of remorse shot quickly through his heart. He gathered up his reins, and rode away, resolving that he would hereafter be true to his vow. But sunlight and a loving wife proved stronger than moonlight and a dead one, and the result has been seen.

Mr. Severn thenceforward carefully avoided the path that led by the grave of Amy. He would not listen to any reproaches from memory or conscience. He had enough of present joy, and he was determined to be happy.

Celia was pet and plaything for him, and he did not miss his children while she was good-natured, or in a loving mood. But bye-and-bye he began to learn that this was not at all times. When she had got things all pretty well suited to her mind, she began to relax in her efforts to amuse her husband. She had a very violent temper, and this now asserted itself more and more frequently. Not a few times, when Henry would fain have had her, with the enticing ways which she could so well assume, charm away some trouble from his mind, she had angrily driven him from her presence, saying she was "perfectly sick and tired of the sight of him." Then, indeed, did his heart look backward with a painful yearning; and he thought longingly of his children.

It was on one of these occasions that Severn walked resolutely to the stable, and, ordering his carriage to be made ready, drove off to the place where his poor children had passed their long exile.

The ways of transgressors are, even in this world, apt to be *hard* ways; and poor Severn arrived at the farmhouse on the banks of the L. river, in time to see his twin sons lying still and pale, their bright curls yet damp from the river where they had died. The little fellows had gone down to bathe, and one, losing his footing, had called for help to the other, who had hastened out to his own death.

When Celia next beheld her husband he came bearing the dead bodies of his sons, and accompanied by his poor, desolate, and weeping daughter. The sweet little boys were buried in one coffin, and in their mother's grave. They had been loving and lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided. It was long ere the effects of this shock wore off from the mind of Henry; but it went at last—at least all outward effect; and with it went his resentment against his wife; and his *manifested* affection toward his daughter. Celia was jealous of every spark of love shown to Amy, and it was the surest way to displease her, to show kindness or generosity to the lone child. So Amy shrank away as much as possible from sight. The birth of a fine young son; and, then, in due time, another, and another, seemed to fill up the father's heart; and he almost *forgot* his first born child. The house was gay, and generally overrun with company, but few were they who ever got speech with the pale, pensive-looking Amy. Many supposed her an adopted child, or some dependent relative. Amy was one of those strangely adhesive creatures, who cling through life to whatever or whoever they once fully love. She mourned for and missed her mother and her brothers, just as much when she entered her eighteenth year, as she did when they first left her. She had no disposition to seek for friendship and love *out* of her family; and as she could not have it in, she lived, or rather suffered, on without it. Little pains had been taken to cultivate her moral nature. She had been sent to good masters of intellectual knowledge; but was almost a young heathen with respect to theology, and all its attendent truths and duties.

When the voice of *love* sung to her its first low song, Amy was intoxicated by its sweetness.

That there was refuge and support for her poor neglected heart was a strange, bewildering joy.

She had not dared to hope it—could it be possible that she was taken as one beloved to the heart of him upon whom she had long looked as a prince among men. Amy knew nothing of the art of concealing joyful or loving emotions—and when the man who had for many months been weaving his net about her, at length, with words of tenderest pity and warmest love, won her to his arms, she could not do other than reveal to him the measureless delight and gratitude of her ardent nature. He received this confidence with exultation and self-reproach: exultation—for he knew now that she was his irrevocably—his, in all her youthful and unborrowed charms: self-reproach—for he had won her to repose within a villain's arms. Poor Amy! she disappeared from her father's house; and no where could he ever find her. His efforts were long continued and earnest; for his mind misgave him regarding his unnoticed child. He feared how it was—that missing the love that home should have given her, she had been lured away by what she deemed was a better and truer love.

Years passed by, and when six had gone, there came a letter to Henry Severn. It ran thus:—

"My dear Father:—When you read this letter, your wicked and lost Amy will be where reproof and shame can not reach her—deep in the grave.

Nobody at home seemed to love me. I never had a cheerful, happy day there after mamma died. Dear Father, I always loved you; but I knew that you did not care about having me with you—so I kept alone till I got afraid of my own shadow. I spent hours and hours in the arbor near the river. Once when I was there a gentleman—who was your friend—found me. I had always admired him. I felt a great awe of his beauty, his knowledge and his age—for he was many years older than I. That he should speak to or notice *me* I had not thought; but he did. He came into the arbor and sat down to talk with me. He made a wreath of flowers and put it on my head, and said that I was as sweet and lovely as the flowers. No one had ever said such a thing to me till then. His talk was all strangely pleasant, and when the next morning I saw him stand again before me I was very glad; yet very much confused. He came every day, and my life grew bright and happy.—That arbor was the birth-place of all my joy—it was my Eden,—I wish that in its dear shade I could be laid to die—but I shall never see it more. My friend took me to his breast and called himself my lover; and told me that I must consent to go away to a happy home with him.

I looked backward on the darkness; and forward on the blessedness of a life with him I loved; and all things else reeled from my sight and thought. Then I confessed that for his love I was ready and glad to give up all things. He bore me hither—'tis a sweet, secluded spot—I will not tell you *where*; for you will not care to look upon a grave of infamy; and you must not know *his name* who was my ruin, for you would feel that you must avenge your child's and your own wrongs. Yet he has been ever most kind to me.

True, in all things to which he pledged himself, he has been—and I have been happy—happier than I had ever hoped to be. But it is almost over—my life is spent, and I go—I know not whither. I have asked *him* to bring me a bible, but he only says:—

"No, no, my Amy. That is a book that would do you only harm. It would distress you, sweet, with its grim terrors. Have faith in me. Who else has loved you so? I tell you that one so gentle and so lovely as you are need not fear to die—if die you must. In *me* your trust shall be, and you shall sleep beloved and comforted upon my breast."

Such has he ever been to me; yet he has made me yield in all things to his will—ruling most tenderly, but absolutely. If I had wished to leave him I never should have had power to depart—and oh! Father, I never have wished it. If ever you should discover him, harm him not; for, though he made me what I am, he loved me far better than *you* did. Forgive him for that love's sake, and for the kindness with which he has cherished me. I will not reproach you, but if you are tempted to curse your child remember that you might have *saved* her—remember that she was a motherless, neglected, unloved girl; and that she, at the first, was guilty of no greater sin than to love dearly the only one who ever cared for her. Remember that her life is finished, and that her poor, senseless clay sleeps, to know no more joy or sorrow—and remember that while dying she still thought of, and loved, her father. Dear Father, I can write no more—farewell—a long farewell.

From your unworthy, but ever-loving daughter,
AMY.

Henry Severn read this letter with haggard look, and when it was finished he rose up and went to the grave of his wife—that lost one's mother. There was a grief now planted in his breast, that all the arts and blandishments of the selfish Celia could not wile away. A blow had struck him whose smart he must carry to his grave.

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MEAN.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

To torment helpless cats, or superannuated horses—to enjoy pelting unoffending frogs, or tying tin pans to the tails of dogs; to rob birds' nests, or terrify little girls half out of their wits; to snarl up old maids' knitting cotton, turn their work-boxes upside down, or *ever* to ask them why they don't get married. To impose upon people who are in your power; to try to "put down" one whom you once treated as an equal, solely because he has been so unfortunate as to have become your employee. The nature which can domineer over and insult the unfortunate or helpless is ignoble to the last degree—such people are not worthy of humanity, imperfect as it is.

Mean—to take advantage of the generosity or love of any person to make him do for you what *you* would not as readily do for *him*, if need were. Mean—to suck out the whole confidence and affection of a friend's heart, and then refuse to unseal your own to him. Mean, meaner, meanest—to seek to excite interest, or win love that you do not intend fully to reciprocate. Mean—not to do to every living creature, what you, if in his, or its circumstances, might rightfully desire to have done to you. *Meanest of all*—to forget God; to refuse your heart to Him who made it.

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AN ERROR OF THE PRESS.—A country newspaper, recording the running down of a cow on the railway, said it was "cut into calves!" An astonished naturalist waited upon the editor for what the auctioneers call "further information," and received it in the following form:—"ERRATUM—*for calves* read *halves*."

COME.

BY ALICE CARY.

Come from your long, long roving
  On the sea so wild and rough;
Come to me tender and loving,
  And I shall be blest enough.

Where your sails have been furling,
  What winds have blown on your brow,
I know not, and ask not, my darling,
  So that you come to me now!

Sorrowful, sinful, and lonely;
  Poor and despised though you be;
All, all are nothing, if only
  You turn from the Tempter to me.

Of men though you be unforgiven;
  Though priest be unable to shrive·
I'll pray till I weary all Heaven,
  If only you come back alive!

PAUL WHATELY'S ANGEL.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Paul Whately was the sickly little son of a poor widow, who lived in a little brown wooden house, on the outskirts of a straggling New England village. He was eight years old when he first went to school, though his mother had long before taught him to read, as he sat upon a stool by her side, she all the time plying the needle, by which she added something to her scanty income, with unceasing industry.

It was a bright summer morning when Paul hung up his straw hat in the school-house entry, for the first time. The school had commenced, for he had bashfully lingered until the noisy group, that had gathered before the door, were called in, before he made his appearance. His coarse garments were extremely neat, and his pale little face shone with cleanliness, while his soft brown hair hung in the pretty ringlets that his mother had twined round her finger before he left home. With his spelling book in his hand, he crept shyly in, and stood hesitating and blushing beside the door.

The mistress did not see him at first, for she was busily occupied in hearing the first class in the English Reader, but presently, when the scholars began to look in that direction, and to titter and point at the poor little fellow, she turned round and saw him standing there. Then she went and took him by the hand and led him to a seat.

Paul sat up straight, looking before him and holding his spelling book very close, until the teacher had finished hearing the class. When they had taken their seats, she came to him again and asked his name, and how old he was, and if he could read. And when she had heard him read a little, she gave him a lesson to study, and told him what class he would be in, and that when it was called he must come with the rest.

Paul bent his eyes very closely upon his book for a long time, but, when he had read his lesson several times, his attention wandered and he began to heed what was passing round him. Certain flashing movements at the desk opposite to him had attracted his attention, from time to time, and he ventured at last to peep from under his long, brown lashes in that direction.

There he saw a little head bent till the long, light curls—soft like flaxen, floss-silk, almost hid the tattered spelling book upon the desk, but only for a moment. The curls were floating about with constant, vivacious movements of the little head, that presently disclosed a sweet face, dimpled all over with smiles, a tiny red mouth, bright eyes, and a low, white brow. This neighbor was a little girl nearly of his own age, a bright, restless creature—one of those "uneasy" children who are irresistibly engaging, although at the same time a fearful trial to nervous people—such as bachelor uncle's, invalid mammas, and tired and cross persons generally.

But to Paul, who was entirely unused to the society of children, and who was attracted by an irresistible power toward all things beautiful, she was as an angel out of heaven. He continued to gaze upon her, in his delight, entirely forgetful of his shyness, and she, all the time, smiling back at him, and moving restlessly about with a motion that floated her long curls and full muslin dress. When Paul's class was called he did not hear, and the teacher came to bring him and he awoke as out of a dream.

When school closed Paul hung back shyly until all were gone. But when he went out he found the little girl waiting for him, upon the porch, and she walked along by his side toward his home. She rattled away with childish vivacity, asking him many questions, and giving him a great deal of information, until he reached his home.

"Do you live here?" said she, as he turned to enter. "What a queer little house. What's your name, little boy?"

"Paul Whately," he said. "Now, please, tell me your name."

"Oh, I'm Angela Bernard—'Angel,' my papa calls me. I live up there," pointing to a large, white house upon an eminence near.

Paul looked and saw, that it was the fine new house, which he had heard his mother say had been lately built by judge Bernard, who came from the city to live there.

"May I call you Angel, too?" he asked. "You look as I always thought the angels did, when mother has told me about them. A great many times when I have been sick, very sick, and have seen mother weeping because she feared I would die, I have felt quite happy because I should soon go to live with the angels above the sky. Only that mother would be sorry, I should have liked to go."

The little girl had been holding his hand, and dancing up and down, but when he spoke thus, she stopped and looked at him steadfastly.

"You are a strange little boy," she said at last, "but I will be your angel now, and then you will not want to go away from your mother, and from me."

She came very close and kissed him, with her rosy lips in her childlike innocence. Then she bounded away and left him standing there, all flushed with a pleased surprise, mingled with shyness, and gazing after her until his mother called him to come in.

Thus Paul Whately first met the angel of his life. In childhood there was no close-drawn barrier of caste, or rank, between the son of the poor widow and the daughter of the rich man. They walked together, hand in hand, to the little brown school-house, where they both obtained the rudiments of education, together they played by the widow's fireside, or in the large attic, with its stores of quaint, old-fashioned furniture, and clothing, and miscellaneous lumber, which was Angela's play-room at her home. They studied, and rambled, and talked together, and in fact, became inseparable companions, sharing books, playthings, gifts, fruits and flowers, all that they possessed.

They were not separated until the time arrived when Angela was sent to a boarding-school, to finish her education. Paul was greatly tried by this separation, and his health would doubtless have suffered for the grief he felt, had it not also been arranged that he should enter as pupil a large academy in a neighboring town. Mrs. Whately had long lamented her inability to give her son such an education as she wished and as he desired; and she lamented the fact more when she listened to Angela's accounts of the preparations that were making for her going to school, and saw Paul's look of dejection.

At this period, perhaps a week after Angela's departure, during which time Paul had pined and wandered aimlessly about his accustomed resorts, Judge Bernard came to his assistance. He had become interested in Paul for Angela's sake, and desired, as he told Mrs. Whately, to do something to forward her purposes for his daughter's little friend. So by his aid Paul was placed at the Academy.

During their school-days Paul and Angela seldom met. Sometimes Angela was traveling with her friends during the vacations—sometimes the house was filled with gay guests who frightened the shy youth from the premises, while he, anxious to make the most of Judge Bernard's aid, worked very busily during his visits at home, at anything that would add to his small means.

Their school-days closed at about the same period. Angela came home a beautiful, accomplished young lady, pre-eminently graceful and attractive. Life opened before her full of rosy hues and promises of joy. She took her place as a queen in society with a right regal grace, that made her rule most delightful to her subjects.

Mrs. Whateley died just as Paul, having completed the term of his indentures, was ready to establish himself in business. No tie bound him now to his native village, unless the fact that Angela's home was there, with its strong attractions, constituted such a bond. He felt that it was useless for him to remain there. He had discovered, long ere this, that his "Angel" was dearer far to him than the measure of the old sisterly relation, and that there was a great gulf between them, over which he could not hope to pass until he had made a golden bridge to walk upon, or gained a name that would bring him nearer to the height upon which she stood.

He resolved to seek the West—that field where the sons of New England have been wont to display the enterprising traits of character which belong to their race. He went almost hopeless, so far as Angela was concerned, because he knew that, with her beauty, and her wealth, and all her excellences, she would soon be sought, and doubtless won in marriage, by some fortunate man; but thinking of her as his "Angel" still, and resolved to make himself, for her sake, all that she, in her sisterly regard, could desire to see him.

He took up his abode where the nucleus of a great city had already been established. He had selected his place wisely, for there was a great demand for the services of competent mechanics. His knowledge of architecture helped him, as the city grew. He made designs for churches and other public buildings, as well as for dwellings, that attracted attention. Orders flowed in upon him. He had an army of men under his employ, and, with business so extensive, came a golden reward in proportion.

Five years from the time he commenced upon his first small framed house, in C., he was known, over all the Western country, as "Whateley, the great architect." Whole streets of lofty buildings belonged to him, and one among them, built from designs he had long studied, and entirely under his own eye, was still unoccupied, but designed, secretly, for his own home.

At last he might approach his "Angel." He had bridged the gulf, and nothing now should hinder him from laying heart and fortune at her feet. From the time he left his native village he had maintained sufficient correspondence with old friends there, to keep him informed of Angela's welfare. Much to his surprise and joy, he heard of many offers rejected, and that she still remained unmarried. Sometimes he almost ventured to hope it had been for his sake.

He had never written to her, but on the fifth anniversary of his arrival in C. he sat down, pale and trembling, in the solitude of his room to do so. The letter did not satisfy him, though he wrote and re-wrote it many times. He wrote of his long hopeless love—love that had grown even more deep and steadfast from the day, when a little fairy child, she promised to be his "Angel." He told her that for her sake he had lived, and studied, and toiled, how he had taken the good fortune that had attended all his endeavors as a token that she, his "Angel," was not utterly unmindful of him, and that she would grant him still a sister's love, if she could not be what he desired more than life, or aught else that life could bring—his wife. The letter was sent, and he awaited the reply with intense anxiety and feverish impatience.

It came at last, and destroyed the bright hopes he had been weaving. Angela wrote thus:

> "Dear Paul—Why have you kept silence so long? I had not dreamed of this, or, perhaps, if I had known it long ago, it might have been otherwise with us both. But now I have promised to be the wife of another—my parents desire it—I honor and respect him—I am pledged by all but the promises at the altar. I fear you will suffer when you read this, but, if it will in the least comfort you, remember that I am, and shall ever be, still Your "Angel."

Paul was a strong man, but he was bowed by this shock very deeply. He had built up a structure of hope, all unconsciously, and when it fell in ruins the shock was terrible. But he survived it. He was not all desolate, for had she not promised to be his "Angel" still? He went about his life-work just as he had done before, to all outward appearance, and none knew how the buoyant hopes that had upheld him had slipped away. After he heard of Angela's marriage his life was very monotonous and cheerless—he felt, more and more, the need of female companionship and a home. His great house stood empty, with echoes in all the wide, lofty rooms. If Angela were never to dwell there, why should he not seek some loving, true-hearted woman, he asked himself, and fill the house he had prepared for himself with the voices of a wife and children, if God should grant him the great happiness of being a father.

He married such a woman as he had sought for, and was happy. But after two or three years, very peaceful and quiet, his young wife passed from his side and went down into the grave. She left behind her two lovely little ones, bequeathing them with her latest breath to his tender care. One of these—a tiny infant—he named Angela, and then, for the first time since he had learned that his "Angel" was not to take her place by his side, he wrote to her. And she replied with a letter full of tender sympathy, thanking him for giving her name to the little one, and sending many messages of comfort.

Paul found himself very lonely. He had no mother, no sister, to make his home *home-like* to him. His children, entrusted to the care of hirelings, pined and sickened. They languished for the care of a mother, as he, with his loving heart and social nature, pined for the society of a wife. And so, after a time, he married again. There was even less of love in this marriage than the first. He had loved his dead wife only second to Angela—he fancied even now that his love for Angela had become but the affection of a brother. This time, he had thought much of his children's needs, and the lady he made his wife called forth sentiments of respect and admiration, and even of genuine regard; but, in spite of himself, she always presented herself to his mind as connected rather with the happiness of his little ones, than his own.

Six months after this marriage he learned that Angela was a widow. Traveling east with his family, he met her in the city where he took up his abode for a few weeks. She had come to the city on business connected with the estate of her deceased husband, and was stopping at the same hotel with himself.

Their meeting was most friendly, and even affectionate. They met like long parted members of the same family. Angela's interest in her friend's little ones, made her, if possible, more beautiful in the sight of Paul than ever she had been before, while her demeanor towards his wife was so perfect as to win his highest respect. If he felt regrets for his hasty marriage, now that Angela was free, as he doubtless did, he concealed them from every eye, and the friends parted without one allusion to the hopes, or feelings, of other days.

Paul only knew and felt that she was his "Angel" still, and that any faltering in his career of honorable endeavor would render him unworthy of what was, after all, his life's best boon—Angela's affectionate approval. After that meeting their relations changed. Angela, childless herself, seemed to have taken to her heart the "angel child" who bore her name. And presents, and loving messages, and motherly advice for the little one, were constantly arriving from her, to keep her memory warm in the hearts of her friends.

And so many years passed away. Paul Whateley's daughter stood upon the threshold of womanhood, when they were called to part with the woman who had, for nearly all their lives, fulfilled towards them, with scrupulous and affectionate fidelity, the duties of a mother. In the parting hour Paul learned that she had long known all, and that almost her whole life as his wife, had been embittered by the thought that she had come to stand between him and his happiness. Recalling all that she had so faithfully performed for him and his, during those years so saddened, he felt that he loved and honored her far more in that hour than ever before; and a pang of sorrow went through his heart, at the thought of parting from her thus, before he could prove his gratitude and affection.

The flowers planted by the hands of her foster-children had bloomed for two summers on the grave of Paul Whateley's wife, when he set out to visit Angela. He felt that he, who had already been the husband of two wives, had little claim upon her heart, even if she still felt something of the old affection. But he also felt that he must know his fate; and whatever she decided it to be, must tell her how, all his life, in all circumstances, and through all relations, she had been still his "angel," and would be while life remained; whether in her widowhood and loneliness—as the wife of another, or, in his own home, the best beloved of his heart, as she had ever been.

Angela met him with the same smile she had ever worn; she listened to his words with a blush that beautified her still unfaded cheek; and when he had finished, she laid her hand in his and looked up in his face with a glance as truthful as she had worn in childhood.

"Where should your 'Angel' be, dear Paul, but by your side?" she said. "I know not why we should have walked so long apart; but He who orders all things, knew that it was best for us. Now, we will spend the remainder of our lives together, and we know, do we not, that we shall be so happy as to forget all the sorrows and trials of the past."

So at last, Paul Whateley, brought his "Angel" to his home, which she brightened by her presence for many years. When death again entered that mansion it took the master first, and then Angela laid aside her mortal form, and went to dwell with him where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but where they both are as the angels in Heaven.

* * *

There are 35,397 widowers in this State, and 95,182 widows—the latter being nearly sixty thousand ahead.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Young Lady informs us that sometime since she entered into a marriage engagement with a young man whom she supposed to be of irreproachable character, but that within a short time it has been discovered that he had formerly been very dissipated, had been indicted for a crime but escaped through a flaw in the indictment, and has been living in the town in which she resides under an assumed name; and our "Young Lady" wishes to know whether she should yield to his earnest solicitations and marry him, or break off the engagement. You should not marry him at present, at all events. The chances are that he is quite unworthy of you. The changing of his name is a very bad and suspicious circumstance, and so is the fact of his having not confided to you his past history. If he is a truly worthy young man it will do him no harm to undergo a long probation; and if he is a scamp your hasty marriage with him would consign you to life-long bondage and misery.

Kentucky Girl.—You describe the symptoms of a bashful young man, who is in love, but is afraid to speak out. Encourage him a little, and he will soon "throw himself away."

F. M. E.—It will not do. You should pay what you agree to pay, no matter if others do not keep their agreements. The truly honest man is honest from *principle* and not from circumstances.

M. J. R.—You should of course devote much attention to your physical comfort and well-being while on the earth; the human body is a *living machine, constructed for the use and habitation of a spiritual being.*

Susan.—No. If the "gallant" young man objects to your informing your mother of his offer—refuse it.

P. R., Philadelphia.—The law as it stands with respect to bigamy is, perhaps, not in conformity with the advance of civilization, but it is stringent and good enough to take care of those *who know how to take care of themselves.* From the lengthened statement that you have sent us about yourself, you appear previously to your marriage to have made yourself acquainted with not one single passage in the history of your wife. You knew not who were her parents, her relations, her connections, her friends. Her place of abode was a mystery to you—not less so her conduct and character. None could tell you what ties she had contracted. Well, this vagrant who comes to Philadelphia, you are *insane* enough to marry. After which she proves to be an abandoned female, elopes, you make inquiries about her, and in the course of your investigations, have reasons to suspect her guilty of bigamy; but at the same time, you have your doubts whether her former husband was not himself a bigamist. In that case, her marriage with him was illegal; and left her quite free to marry you. The law, therefore, can afford you no redress for the deceit she practised upon you. Nay, acknowledging her as your lawful wife, it obliges you—as long as she is not divorced from you, to support her under all circumstances, even though she may be living with a paramour. You are certainly to be commiserated; but you are much to be blamed. Had you married with all due caution you would have no occasion to make any complaints against the law.

Miss E. L. B.—The old ballad which so affected the poor little orphan, "Jane Eyre," is the following, and a beautiful one it is:

"My feet they are sore, and my limbs they are weary·
  Long is the way, and the mountains are wild;
Soon will the twilight close, moonless and dreary
  Over the path of the poor orphan child.

"Why did they send me so far and so lonely,
  Up where the moors spread and gray rocks are piled?
Men are hard-hearted, and kind angels only
  Watch o'er the steps of a poor orphan child.

"Yet distant and soft the bright breeze is blowing,
  Clouds there are none, and clear stars beam mild;
God, in his mercy, protection is showing,
  Comfort and hope to the poor orphan child.

"Even should I fall o'er the broken bridge passing,
  Or stray in the marshes, by false lights beguiled,
Still will my Father, with promise and blessing,
  Take to his bosom the poor orphan child.

"There is a thought that for strength should avail me,
  Though both of shelter and kindred despoiled;
Heaven is a home, and a rest will not fail me:
  God is a friend to the poor orphan child."

A Fond Husband says his wife unfortunately has sisters who have strayed from the path of virtue, but whom she, nevertheless, still loves. These sisters sometimes visit at his house, and his wife goes shopping with them, and also sometimes accompanies them in the afternoon to a certain popular place of public resort. He has remonstrated with her, again and again, and she has promised as often to discontinue her excursions with them, but has continually broken her promises. He now asks, "What shall I do?" You should at once inform your wife that she must discontinue her appearing in public with the disreputable women alluded to, or else prepare for a lasting separation from yourself. If you have not the nerve to carry such a course through to the end, you had better keep perfectly quiet, and let things take their course, as no half-way and boggling measures will answer in such a case.

A Society of Young Persons who meet together for the discussion of various subjects, desire to be informed if water between the same parallels will not press downwards with the same force either in a perpendicular or in a slanting direction. Certainly. All the particles of fluids are so connected that they press equally in every direction, and are equally pressed upon: each particle presses equally on all the particles that surround it, and is equally pressed upon by these: it equally presses upon the solid bodies which it touches, and is equally pressed upon by those bodies. This being the peculiar property of a fluid when left to itself and at rest, it follows that no matter whether it passes through a passage that is large or small, upright or slanting, crooked or spiral, or globular, no difference whatever is produced in its weight.

Susan Slidell.—We do not suppose that any one writer, however talented, could possibly interest and please everybody, and that is why we engage so many eminent authors and authoresses, and poets and poetesses, and wits and paragraphists, to write for the Ledger. By giving such an unparalleled variety, not only as regards the style, but the subject-matter, and characteristics of conception and treatment also, we are enabled to please all tastes, and impart a perennial freshness and charm to the Ledger such as no other paper can command.

Isabella.—Your friend was blame-worthy for speaking in such a tyrannical manner to the seamstress. When ladies "put on airs," and attempt to "carry matters with a high hand," they must look to their "airs" and "high hand" for support and sympathy. A person who resorts to any particular course of action must abide by the fruits of such course, and not whine if the fruits prove bitter.

Justice.—It is a very easy thing to "demand justice," and to clamor about justice, but it is quite another and a most difficult thing to determine *what is* justice. If you could have your own way in the case referred to, you would doubtless soon settle it according to your idea of justice in the premises; but the other parties would be pretty apt to consider it a most *unjust* settlement.

Terpsichore.—You must be your own judge as to the influence which an attendance at dancing-school and balls would exert upon your children. We do not wish to dictate to any parent or family in regard to such matters. As a general rule, we can only say that the utmost discretion is necessary in the regulation of them.

J. J.—We do not know of an essay on the subject to which you allude: but we should imagine that a spend-thrift is more beneficial to society than a miser, as the money he squanders is of advantage to others—whereas the wealth hoarded by a miser can be of use neither to himself nor to his fellow-creatures.

General.—Your neighbors are very foolish to decry the military talents of Wellington, who was one of the greatest commanders the world has known. That patriotism which blinds one to the merits of those who live in other lands, is of the most shallow and contemptible kind.

D. L. T.—You should not expect a servant to have any more patience with your sick child than you have yourself. If you "get all worn out with it," you must expect your servant to become utterly exasperated.

Helenor.—We cannot state when the bridal ring was first used, nor is it positively known what nation introduced the custom of using it. It was formerly much disputed whether the credit of the invention should be attributed to the ancient Jews or to the Egyptians; but as the latter were so much advanced with occult science, it is probable they may have copied the ring from the reputed aspect of the elementary attributes—earth, air, fire, and water being formed by the combination of several small circles or globules: the rotundity of the planets might have suggested the shape to astronomers, whilst the peculiar powers of the astrological circle, used by the Egyptians in incantations and religious ceremonies, must not be forgottten. This people manufactured it from various metals, and also used stone and marble, which they covered with hieroglyphics and preserved as amulets: iron appears to have been a valued metal for the substance of the ring, which was not unfrequently adorned with precious stones, and modeled like a serpent—emblematic of *wisdom*, of *eternity*, and a token of the first woman's beguilement. Thus we may suppose that the protruding points of the ring were worn away to a comparatively even surface, and that the rude jewelers of antiquity soon abandoned a labor useless as the idea was absurd. In the early ages, when superstition was rife, the wedding-ring was fenced about with such secret powers as (it was supposed) enabled its possessor to secure happiness, and by its omens to predict the course of future years. Like the Venetian Moore's magic-webbed and strawberry-spotted handkerchief, the young bride had to guard it with jealous care—

"——— To lose't, or give't away,
'Twere such *perdition as nothing else* could match!"

The loss of a wedding-ring predicted the lapse of marital love, and its breakage was an omen of death. Even at the present time, females are to be found who attribute the cessation of domestic concord to a removal of the ring after it had been placed by the priest, and those who would avoid quarrels with their husbands are solemnly cautioned against a similar mishap. And it is probable that the world will ever continue to regard with peculiar emotions—not to say superstitions—

That magic ring, whose mystic powers can bind
What guards cannot control—the female mind.
The Satrap's vigilance, the Turkish chain,
Duennas, veils, and lattices, are vain;
The wall'd seraglio, or the threatened rack,
The Moorish vengeance, scimitar, and sack,
Are ineffectual all. This round of gold
Safe, though unwatched, can wildest beauty hold,
And proves that virtue by one pledge controls
Our peerless goddesses and free-born souls.

Antoinette.—It is a difficult matter to say who has written the most pathetic and eloquent passages, though it would perhaps not be erroneous to ascribe that honor to Shakespeare. The speech of Cordelia as she smoothes the white hair of her poor old father, Lear, as he sits slumbering, after his cruel treatment by his unnatural daughters Gonnerel and Regan, and his horrid exposure to the tempest, may be cited as exquisitely pathetic:

Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Did challenge pity of them. Was this a face
To be exposed against the warring winds?
My very enemy's dog,
Though he had bit me, should have stood that night
Against my fire. And wast thou fain, poor father,
To hovel thee with swine, and rogues forlorn,
In short and musty straw?

And Lear's reply, when, on his returning to sensibility, Cordelia kneels to him and asks his benediction, is without a parallel. Daniel Webster said he could never read it without shedding tears:

——— Pray do not mock me:
I am a very foolish, fond old man,
Fourscore and upward; and, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.
Methinks I should know you, and know this man
Yet I am doubtful; for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is. Do not laugh at me;
For as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child, Cordelia.

A Postmaster writes us that many of his fellow-citizens, who are too penurious to subscribe for the Ledger, are in the habit of coming to the post-office to read the papers of those who do subscribe for it, and he wants to know if there is no remedy for such a nuisance. It strikes us that there is most certainly a remedy. Our postmaster should not permit loafers to hang around his office and appropriate other people's property to their own use. If anybody and everybody has a right to come into a post-office, and take other people's papers from the boxes, and read them, then we have been in error on this point all our lives. Such a practice is a most shameful one, and should be at once extinguished.

L. S. C.—It would not be at all improper to pay for the daguerreotype of a young lady whom you had asked for her miniature. The most pleasant way to manage such a case would be to accompany her to the gallery and have duplicates of your own and her daguerreotypes taken, and then each retain copies. If the young lady is rich, the payment will be of no consequence, and you had better let her act her own pleasure as to time, place, price and payment.

Joshua.—You could probably buy land in good localities in the West cheaper a year hence than now. At present prices are astoundingly inflated by speculation; but the speculators will have to succumb before long; there will be a general failure and breaking up of their wild schemes, and then a man with cash in his pocket can buy at a great advantage. You would do well to hold on a little while.

Sabbath-School Teacher.—Never mind the raillery of your dissipated acquaintances. The occupation of Sabbath-school teaching is one of the most honorable and praiseworthy in which a man can engage. Twenty years from now, should you live so long, your sneering companions, or such of them as remain unhung, will admit the wisdom of your course.

Charlemagne.—It is not surprising that a boy of your age should "burn for the honors of the tented field," and "long to plow the briny deep," as you poetically declare yourself. But we should advise a son of ours to aspire rather to the honors of the harvest field, and to do his "plowing" among the corn and potatoes rather than on the briny deep.

S. H. J.—You should eat only well-cooked aud nourishing food, take plenty of exercise, and bathe daily, rubbing yourself relentlessly with a stiff flesh-brush or a very coarse towel. Such treatment has often cured dyspepsia, weakness in the back, and similar ailments. If you are lazy and afraid of plenty of cold water your case is hopeless.

Winnie.—When a person has made a blunder or done something discourteous, the best thing for him to do is to apologize and make a full reparation. Therefore, if you really care for the gentleman's good opinion, hasten to correct your error in the frankest and most explicit manner consistent with dignity.

Chess-Player.—Chess is an elegant and interesting game, and one in which a rational being can take much delight; but we think you are not justified in spending three-fourths of your time in playing at it. Your wife certainly has just cause of complaint.

Harold.—We have heard of the legend you mention in regard to Harold, the last Saxon King of England, not having been slain at the battle of Hastings, but living as a monk to an advanced age. There is not the slightest historical foundation for such a story, however.

W. C., Cedar Mills.—We know nothing about the doctor to whom you refer, as living in this city. As a general thing, those who advertise as being remarkable men, and as performing wonderful cures, are not to be implicitly believed.

Socrates.—You should emulate the patience of the philosopher whose name you have assumed, and let your enemies significantly alone. It is almost always a losing business to attempt to wreak revenge upon one who has wronged you.

The Doctor.—Your ideas in regard to the requisites of good writing are very just; but the article you sent does not by any means come up to your own standard. It is much easier to *define* good writing than to *produce* it.

Alfred.—Of course there is a chance for you in the practice of the law in this city. For an able and determined person there is always a chance anywhere and everywhere, and at any time and all times.

Jamaica, L. I.—You can get the Ledger at the news-offices in your place. We do not wish for mail subscriptions from places where there are news-offices.

Gunshot.—The man who told you that there is a cannon in Dover (Eng.) that would send a ball across the strait of Calais, was probably testing the capacity of your credulity.

Lizzie W.—Address a note to the Principal of the State Normal School at Albany, and he will give you all the information concerning that institution you desire.

O. R. P.—You can obtain the back numbers of the Ledger from this issue to the first of October last, and even to the 7th of June, 1856, if you want them. They are four cents each.

Black Hawk.—We do not sympathize with your aboriginal sentimentalism. The Indians are a savage and inferior race, and will not repay any effort to civilize them.

L. C. G.—You had better not go to the opera, or other places of amusement, if you have to leave your young children to the care of irresponsible servants.

Constantinople.—You could live very well in any of the Mediterranean seaports on a thousand dollars a year; you could easily dissipate ten times that amount.

Ex-Valet.—A jury who are not convinced that a prisoner is guilty of murder, can bring him in guilty of manslaughter.

A Young Subscriber.—The "Niagara" is the largest vessel in the active service of the United States Navy.

S. D. T.—We are not disposed to countenance betting or gaming of any kind whatever.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*